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AN EXAMINATION OF THE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS
CONFLICTS INVOLVED IN THE PROVISION OF
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN ENFIELD
BETWEEN 1870^{and} 1903.

Sylvia L. Collicott, B.A. P.G.C.E.

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Middlesex Polytechnic in association with the
Institute of Education, University of London,
and in collaboration with the London Borough
of Enfield Local History and Museum Department.

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

An examination of the political and religious conflicts involved in the provision of elementary education in Enfield between 1870 and 1903.

The immediacy and importance of local as opposed to national politics in the nineteenth century has been well charted by historians.

W.E. Forster's Education Act of 1870 created a new local political context by allowing for the creation of ad hoc bodies, the School Boards, to fill up the gaps in elementary school provision.

Nineteenth-century Enfield was a community undergoing fundamental social and economic changes. Urgent solutions were needed to the urgent problems of religious rivalry, education, housing, the administration of the Poor Law and public health. The processes of urbanisation profoundly disturbed the existing hierarchies of agrarian society and new and powerful commercial, professional and bureaucratic elites were formed. Such a process led to conflict, not least in the matter of elementary school provision. Yet Enfield, with a rapidly expanding population, with many advocates for secular education and surrounded by parishes with School Boards, did not have a School Board until 1894.

This thesis is an examination of the many dimensions of conflict which surrounded elementary school provision in Enfield in the period under review. It is necessary to assess whether the Church schools were offering adequate school accommodation or whether there was a hidden deficiency. The conflicts over school provision ultimately led to the establishment of a School Board. The first School Board Election fully revealed, for the first time, the complex nature of conflict in the community. Religious and party lines were crossed on the issue of elementary education. The personal bitterness manifested in the Election continued on the School Board throughout the years of its existence, 1894-1903. Although the School Board still had a deficiency of school accommodation at its demise, the Board had built four fine school buildings and offered to working-class children a higher standard of excellence in both equipment and teachers.

Sylvia L. Collicott.

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ABBREVIATIONS.

A.S.E.....Amalgamated Society of Engineers.
E.U.D.C.....Enfield Urban District Council.
H.M.I.....Her Majesty's Inspector.
N.S.R.O.....National Society Records Office.
P.P.....Parliamentary Papers.
P.R.O.....Public Records Office.
R.S.A.F.....Royal Small Arms Factory.
S.D.F.....Social Democratic Federation.
T.U.C.....Trades Union Congress.

CHAPTER ONE.

AN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY OF THE PARISH OF
ENFIELD IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY
AND THE EFFECTS OF URBANISATION ON
SCHOOL PROVISION.

The Topographical Study of the Growth of Enfield

Enfield had been the largest parish in Middlesex, before its many divisions, covering an area of 12,633 acres; the parish was eight and a half miles from East to West, and, three to six miles, in an irregular shape, from North to South. (1)

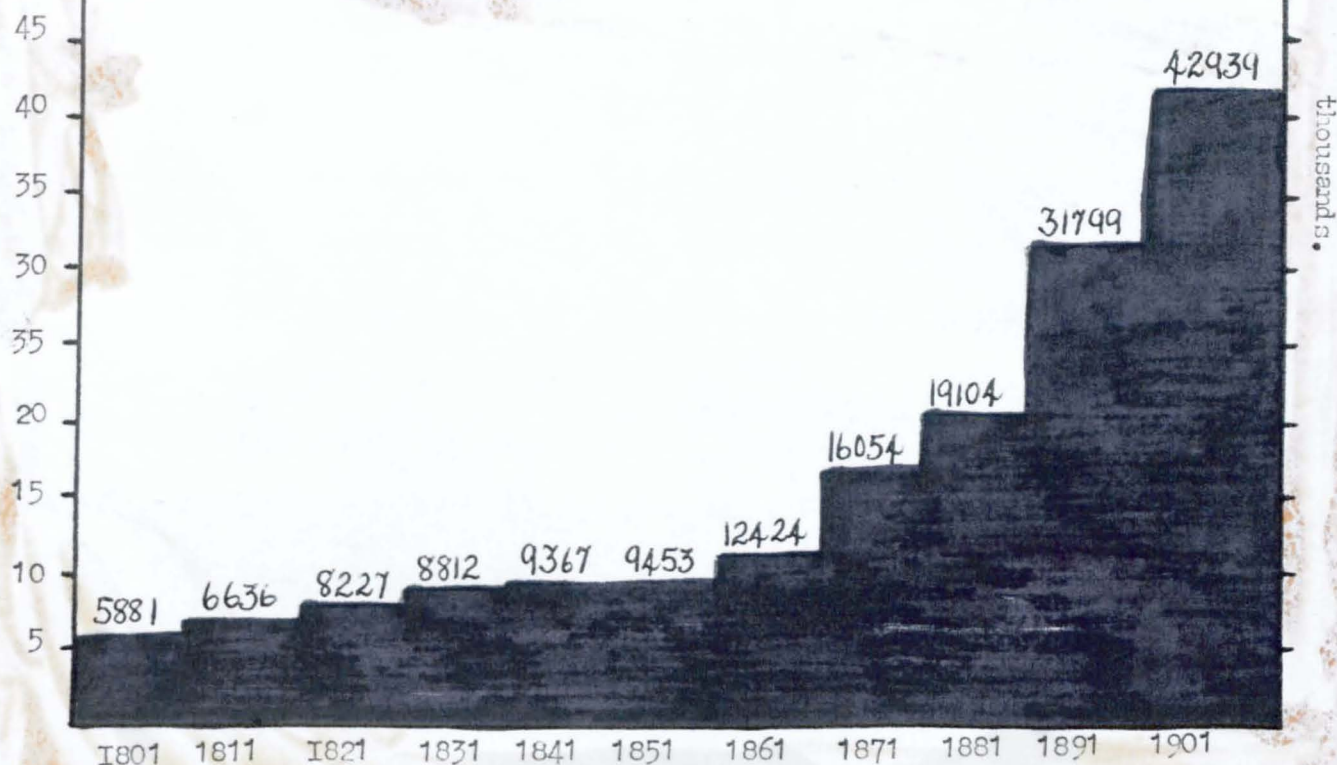
The Town, ten miles north of the City of London, had a population of 5,087 according to the Census of 1871. The total population in the ancient parish, at the same date, was 16,054.

Though Enfield Town is the centre of the parish, it contains the mother Church, some good shops, the market cross, and is the seat of the petty sessions and the local and parochial boards, a much larger portion of the population is settled in Enfield Highway which stretches along the Hertford Road from Ponders End on the South to beyond Enfield Wash on the North with a good many streets running off on the right towards the Lea, along which are several large factories. The ecclesiastical district of Enfield Highway had, in 1872, a population of 5,027, including that of the colony which has grown up in connection with the Royal Small Arms Factory. (2)

The nature of the parish was essentially rural, although as Thorne pointed out, there were already factories in the eastern districts.(3)

-
- (1) C. Whitaker, An Illustrated Historical, Statistical and Topographical Account of the Urban District of Enfield (1911).
 - (2) J. Thorne, The Environs of London (1876), p.181.
 - (3) See Appendix 1. Map of Enfield, 1851.

TABLE I. The population of Enfield in the nineteenth century.



(1)

TABLE II. The percentage increase of population in Enfield.

Date	Increase	Percentage Increase
1861 - 71	3630	29.21
1871 - 81	3050	18.99
1881 - 91	12695	66.43
1891 - 1901	10939	34.40

(2)

(1) Census Reports, 1801 - 1901.

(2) ibid.

Enfield Highway had always been a busy thoroughfare; it was a convenient staging post for coach traffic on the road from London to Cambridge. When coach transport declined, so the numerous inns along the Highway disappeared. By contrast, the Town had been isolated from long distance traffic until the building of the railways. The coming of the railway was to change the nature of the communities and bring new people to Enfield. Its impact was not immediate and it was not until the eighties that Enfield began to be absorbed into the growing, sprawling suburbs of London. (1)

Table I shows the great increase of population in the eighties and the continued rise into the nineties. Table II shows the percentage increase in population, revealing an increase of 66% between 1881-91. The increase in population was precipitated by several railway companies operating within the parish. The Northern and Eastern Railway was built from Stratford to Broxbourne in 1840; this line ran parallel to the River Lea, passing through eastern Enfield with stations at Ponders End and Ordnance Road, Enfield Lock. Three years later, the Northern and Eastern Railway was leased to the Eastern Counties Railway. In 1849, the Enfield Branch line was opened from Angel Road, Edmonton, offering through trains from Enfield Town to Bishopsgate. In 1863, the Great Eastern Railway was formed of the former Eastern Counties Railway and some small lines in East Anglia. In 1872, there was a direct line to Enfield, from Bishopsgate, via Hackney Downs, while two years later Bishopsgate was closed as a terminus and Liverpool Street Station was opened. The line was profitable and encouraged the Company to open

(1) See Appendix II. Map of Enfield, 1897.

the Edmonton to Cheshunt line, 1891, but this was soon to close because of tramway competition.

The second railway line to pass through the parish was built in 1850 by the Great Northern Railway from Kings Cross to Peterborough. A station was opened at New Southgate and the line passed through Hadley Wood, on the western boundary of the parish. A branch line was opened from Wood Green to Enfield in 1871, a further extension to Cuffley was built in 1910.

So, by 1872, Enfield Town had two railway termini and there were two lines, running north to south, through the western and eastern reaches of the parish. In the Victorian period, the coming of the railway frequently changed towns and in many cases blighted good residential areas as a consequence. The original Northern and Eastern line did not bring an influx of people to eastern Enfield, mainly because the line did not offer cheap workmen's tickets. The Eastern Counties Branch line to Enfield stimulated the building of middle-class villas, the district known as the New Town, near to the station. The Great Northern Railway's extension to Chase Side was followed by the building of substantial middle-class villas to the west, and meaner working-class housing to the east. The station at Bush Hill Park, then part of Ponders End, was not opened until 1878, when large middle-class villas were built to the west and mixed development to the east. (1)

When the Great Eastern Railway applied to demolish a large number of houses in order to build the terminus at Liverpool Street, the Company was given permission only if cheap workmen's tickets were issued. (2)

(1) Some larger houses were built to the east of Bush Hill Park Station in First and Second Avenues and St. Mark's Road while the rest of the housing accommodated working-class inhabitants.

(2) J. Kellett, The Impact of the Railways on Victorian Cities (1969).

Railway companies did not like to build into working-class areas or depend on working-class commuters because profits were largely to be made from middle-class travellers. Until the 1860s, only the middle class travelled on suburban trains and they travelled extensively. The cheap workmen's tickets had an impact on the movement of people living in the East End of London. Working-class families moved out of London to Tottenham, Edmonton and Enfield, with the menfolk commuting back into London for work.

The railway caused much working-class growth both in north east London and to the east of the City. "By the end of the century, not merely did the north eastern suburbs house 50% more than other outer sections, but the housing densities and the rate of immigration into the area were 100% greater than those in other sections." (1) The Cheap Trains Act (1883) made more workmen's trains available. The Great Eastern Railway made big profits from running workmen's trains, against all business expectations. However the Company never kept pace with the demand and all through the nineties there were working-class pressure groups in Enfield and Edmonton calling for more cheap trains.(2)

The development of cheap rail travel therefore often led to lower middle class and artisan classes moving into the suburbs previously dominated by the middle classes. This, however, did not happen in Enfield; the middle-class areas to the west of the Town stayed essentially middle class while the working-class areas were mainly to be found to the north and west of the Town. While the growth of Bush Hill Park was purely

(1) J. Kellett, The Impact of the Railways on Victorian Cities (1969), p.376.

(2) George Spicer, later to be Chairman of the School Board was one of the local notables to approach the Directors of the Great Eastern Railway on behalf of the working men using the workmen's trains.

dependent on the existence of the railway, for there had been no settlement previous to the line, the growth of population in the eastern districts of Enfield was due to factors other than railway development.

The development of tram transport led to the growth of new suburban areas in many cities but was not a vital factor of growth in Enfield at this period. (1) Although schemes for a tram route were frequently discussed by the Enfield Urban District Council, the Middlesex County Council electric tramways did not operate in Enfield until the turn of the century; a tramway from Tramway Avenue, Edmonton, to Freezywater, did not open until 11th December, 1907, and a line to Enfield Town did not operate until 1st July, 1909.

Land Development in Enfield.

Land development followed closely on railway development, although railway companies were not allowed to invest in both. Enfield had no large-scale land development following the coming of the railway but it was a period when several large estates came on to the market and were then successfully exploited.

Housing development in Enfield was slow and sporadic. The First and Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey maps reveal that terraced housing was not built in uniform rows but house by house. New streets would therefore fill gradually with houses. (2) The 1850s saw the sluggish development of Raleigh, Essex and Sydney Roads by the National Freehold Land Company. (3) Chase Side, too, was an area of considerable

-
- (1) H. Dyos and M. Wolff, (eds), The Victorian City, 2 Volumes (1973). Vol. I. p.23.
 - (2) It is unknown whether plots of land were sold with a master plan. It would explain the eventual completion of a terrace.
 - (3) This was a middle-class development, now identifiable by its architecture, called the New Town.

building, although there was little building in the Town itself. While middle-class housing was being constructed to the West of what was later known as Chase Station, the North London Society set out the Gordon House estate with working-class housing to the North-East. The growth of working-class housing related more to the suburban line to Liverpool Street Station than to the Great Northern Railway line to Kings Cross.

Lancaster Road developed in 1869. There was land available near the Holly Bush public house in 1878. The Birbeck Freehold Land Society was formed in 1887 and built Birbeck Road, Morley Hill, Woodbine Grove, Myrtle Grove, Violet Avenue, Acacia Road, Lavender Road, Hawthorn Grove, Rosemary Avenue and Primrose Avenue. Despite such lyrical street names, it was a low grade development.

J.S.Moorat died in 1869 and left the large estate of Bush Hill Park to be parcelled off for sale. (1) The Bush Hill Park Company was formed to develop some of the land; large middle-class housing was built in Wellington Road, Village Road, Private Road and Queen Anne's Grove. Building also took place on the other side of the railway line; Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Avenues were completed by 1896 and the building of houses in Main Avenue continued in to the nineties. Millais, Poynter and Landseer Roads were built at the turn of the century. The Conservative Land Society laid out Burleigh, Queen and Stanley Roads, in Bush Hill Park, but built slowly. The estate was to the east of the Great Eastern Railway terminus and intended to offer lower middle-class housing. The area was not considered fashionable and houses were slow to sell, particularly with the working-class Cardigan Estate nearby.

(1) File of Auctioneers brochures. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

The Bycullah Estate was developed in 1878; large middle-class houses were built to the west of the Great Northern Railway terminus. There were large detached houses along the Ridgeway (1860) and further housing was built along Slades Hill and Uplands Park Road (1884).

Chase Green Avenue was developed in 1888, while Ridgeway Oaks Estate came on the market the following year.

The Bridgenhall Estate, in Forty Hall, was set out in 1868. Goat Lane was a working-class development, built early in the seventies,

Garnault Road was built in 1886 and Russell Road in 1903.

Eastern Enfield was similarly expanding. Land that came onto the market was mainly developed as working-class housing: Alma Road, Napier and New Roads were built in Ponders End in 1868. However, Derby Road, built in 1872, was of superior housing. There was considerable building at Enfield Lock. Houses were built in Government Row, Medcalfe and Warwick Roads (1867) to accommodate workers at the Royal Small Arms Factory. Artisan dwellings were built nearer the Highway; Mandeville, Totteridge and Putney Roads (1867). In 1876, land came into the market near Ordnance Road Railway Station where later Standard (1886) and Bradley (1878) Roads were built. There was further building along the Highway itself when St. James Road and Old Road were set out (1881).

Much of the building in Enfield between 1870 - 1903 was on a small scale. There was no shortage of land and builders responded well to the demand for accommodation, steadily keeping up a supply of houses.

The housing problem was therefore adequately managed because the former parish of Enfield did not suffer a similar population explosion to Tottenham and Edmonton. Despite the steady building of private houses, there was a working-class demand for Council housing in the late nineties. The Eastern Enfield Housing League was founded, with four

hundred members, specifically to campaign for the Enfield Urban District Council to build similar council housing, with rents between 5s and 8s a week, to that of neighbouring Edmonton. (1)

The Building Inspector's Reports show building speculation by local builders and shopkeepers. (2) There were few investors who were not Enfield residents, although a small group of builders originated from Tottenham. (3) Such investors satisfied the demand for cheap housing in the last two decades of the century.

The Industrial Development of Enfield.

Enfield developed into a suburb of London following the introduction of the cheap workmen's tickets on the Great Eastern Railway line; it was a dormitory suburb with men commuting back into London for their work. However, once the manpower was available, Enfield gradually took on an economic life of its own. There were already factories of some long-standing, mainly established along the Lea Navigation Canal, with access by barge to the River Thames. The Royal Small Arms Factory was built in 1804, during the Napoleonic Wars, and then re-equipped with new machinery mid-century. The 1871 Census Enumerator Schedules show that over six hundred men, skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled, worked in the factory. A large number of these workers were immigrants to Enfield, having worked in engineering factories all across the country, prior to settling at Enfield Lock.(4)

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- (1) Meyers Observer, 16th August 1901.
 - (2) Building Inspector's Reports to the E.U.D.C. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.
 - (3) It is interesting to examine who were involved in property speculation. Mr. Ford, a grocer, built two houses in Mandeville Road, Mr. Howe, ironmonger and Councillor, built six houses in Albany Road, Mr. Spurgeon, engineer at R.S.A.F., built two houses in Park Road, Mr. Webb, civil engineer and Councillor, built three houses in Raynton Road and Mr. Coward, brick manufacturer and Councillor, built three houses in Lincoln Road, Ponders End.
 - (4) Census Enumerator Schedules, 1871.

The Crape factory, Ponders End, employed a large number of female workers as well as men. The factory opened in 1801, making black mourning cloth for most of the century. The majority of the workforce were local people.

The Jute factory opened in Duck Lees Lane, Ponders End, in 1865. (1) Many of the labourers were Irish, having migrated to Enfield from the Jute mills of Dundee. (2) The factory closed in 1882 causing some unemployment in the district but most of the Jute workers moved away and the Jute houses were left vacant.

The Gas Works were opened in Ponders End in 1859 and employed local men. The Corticine Floor Covering Company began business on the opposite bank of the Lea to the Gas Works (1870). Wright's Flour Mill, South Street, Ponders End, was the site of a medieval mill, enlarged and rebuilt in 1880 with twelve pairs of millstones. In 1886, Edison Swan United Electric Light Company began operating on the Jute factory site. The success of the incandescent light demanded a large workforce in Enfield (3).

While the factories obviously employed a large number of people, many of the newcomers to Enfield were absorbed into small-scale workshops and businesses. The brick industry moved into the Enfield Highway during the nineteenth century, as exploitation of brick earth moved northwards through Tottenham and Edmonton. Much of eastern Enfield was under glass for market gardening thrived on the rich alluvial deposits

(1) 'Industrial Archaeology of Enfield', Enfield Archaeological Society Publication No.2. (1971).

(2) Census Enumerator Schedules, 1871.

(3) 'Industrial Archaeology of Enfield', Enfield Archaeological Society Publication No.2. (1971).

of the Lea Valley, offering employment to a large labour force. The railway companies, the New River Company and the Enfield Board of Health all employed a considerable number of local people.

While industry was expanding, on a national scale, agriculture was changing. The decrease of food prices in the last decade of the century reduced farmers' profits. (1) This resulted in a movement of labour away from the land and to the employment of young children on farms instead. It is difficult to assess the state of agriculture in Enfield, although the proximity to the London markets must have been an important factor. The strident demands for fresh food in the capital must have stimulated the production of farms in Enfield.

Local Political Institutions.

It is necessary to examine in a little detail the parochial institutions in Enfield. Change can only be assessed in the light of what has passed before. Enfield had a Select Vestry in 1821, which was replaced by a Board of Health in 1850. The Board was then dominated by the landed interest. The Board of Health had twelve members, elected by all the ratepayers, each voter having twelve votes. (2) Enfield, in 1894, was divided into wards when the Enfield Urban District Council came into being: Town, Chase and Bulls Cross, Green Street and Ponders End and Ordnance ward, with each ward returning three Councillors. In May 1901, the E.U.D.C. applied to the County Council for Bush Hill Park, included in Ponders End ward, to become a one-member ward. Local residents had argued for a two-member ward which E.U.D.C. had rejected. Permission for a new ward was not granted and the local people were disgruntled at

(1) P. Horn, Education in Rural England 1800 - 1914 (1979)

(2) Each ratepayer could vote for twelve separate men out of a number of candidates. The practice of "plumping" as used in the School Board elections, whereby a voter could put all nine votes behind one candidate, was not allowed.

their under-representation.

Poor Relief in Enfield was administered by the Edmonton Poor Law Union, elected from Cheshunt, Edmonton, Enfield, Hornsey, Southgate, Tottenham, Waltham Abbey and Wood Green. There was a workhouse in Chase Side and, in 1881, the Chase Farm Schools, now the Chase Farm Hospital, were opened for destitute children. (1)

In 1889, in the first elections for the Middlesex County Council, Enfield returned three County Councillors, H.F.Bowles, H.Rumney and J.J.Wilson. Wilson and Bowles were representatives of the Conservative interest and Rumney was a Liberal.

Enfield had been in the constituency of Middlesex, which returned two County members to Parliament. In 1885, the constituency of Enfield, Edmonton, South Mimms and Southgate was set up. The first election returned Viscount Folkestone as Member of Parliament. He held his seat for the Conservative Party until 1889, when Captain Henry Ferryman Bowles became the Conservative M.P.

The Conservative interest was strong in Enfield, both in local and national politics. The leading families in the parish were members of the gentry, who played an active part in local affairs and supported the interests of the Church of England. (2)

The Role of the Churches in Local Life.

On a national level, the Church of England was under the considerable pressure of urbanisation. The Church, however, coped with the growth of

(1) M.Graham, 'The Chase Farm Schools,' Edmonton Hundred Historical Society Occasional Papers No.28 (1974).

(2) The leading families lived in the western districts, although Colonel Bowles M.P. told R.S.A.F. workers that he lived in the same part of Enfield as they. The families were the Bevans at Trent Park, the Fords at Old Park, Colonel Somerset at Enfield Court, James Meyer at Forty Hall (Colonel Bowles succeeded him as owner) the Bowles at Myddleton House, the Warrens at Capel Manor, the Bosanquets at Clayesmore and the Twells at Chase Side House.

big cities by subdividing parishes. Sub-dividing was therefore an index of town growth (1) The parish church of Enfield was St. Andrew's, Enfield Town. It was the richest living in the hands of Trinity College, Cambridge. By the turn of the century the original parish had been divided into ten smaller portions.

St. James', Enfield Highway, was set up in 1833, effectively dividing eastern and western Enfield. Jesus Church, Forty Hill, was created in 1845. St. John the Baptist was set up in 1867, serving the community of Clay Hill. St. Michael's, Chase Side, was built in 1873 as a chapel at ease to St. Andrew's. The parish of St. Matthew's, Ponders End, was established in 1878, while St. Mary Magdalene was opened (1883) to serve the Bycullah Estate. St. Luke's, built in 1899, served the newly built Birbeck Estate and Brigadier Hill, while St. Mark's parish in Bush Hill Park was not officially set up until 1903, St. George's, Freezywater, was established against the wishes of the Rev. Carter, who wanted a parish church near to the Lock (1896). Six of these new parishes had been set up by the Vicar of Enfield, the Rev. Hodson. It was a great achievement to keep apace with the growing population of Enfield. Hodson was concerned to preserve the church's social control, despite the fact that each new parish obviously reduced the income of the Vicar of Enfield. Hodson gave a stipend of £600 to the three churches of St. Michael's, St. Mark's and St. Matthew's. (2) As well as creating new parishes, Hodson was keen to establish new schools as the new communities sprung up. So Hodson fought to maintain a powerful church presence in Enfield, such was the nature of the man.

(1) D. Mole, 'A Challenge to the Church,' in H. Dyos and M. Wolff (eds), The Victorian City, Volume II (1973), pp. 827-829.

(2) Meyers Observer, 5th March 1897.

Despite such efforts, the Anglicans could not arrest the movement away from the church: the power of dissent was strong in Enfield and the process of urbanisation weakened the political and social influence of the church.

There were many nonconformist chapels in Enfield. The Rev. Boulden, in his memoirs, noted the large number of chapels that flourished in Ponders End, regretting that the working-class immigrants were not coming into St. James' Church. (1)

In Enfield Town, there were eight recorded chapels: Lancaster Road Mission, The Baptist Tabernacle in London Road, a Congregational Church in Baker Street, Christ Church was the Congregational Church in Chase Side, a Wesleyan Chapel in Chase Side, the Shirley Hall Mission and the Gospel Hall in Brigadier Hill.

There were only two chapels in the rural areas of Enfield, a Congregational Church at Whitewebbs and a Gospel Hall at Botany Bay.

Ponders End had four recorded chapels: Eden Strict Baptist Church in Nags Head Road, a Congregational Church in the High Road, a Wesleyan Chapel in South Street and the Avenue Hall in Bush Hill Park.

There were five nonconformist churches in Enfield Highway: the Baptist Church in Totteridge Road, the Congregational Church in the Highway, the Putney Road Primitive Methodists, the Wesleyan Chapel in Ordnance Road and the Gospel Hall (Brethren) also in Ordnance Road.

There were also two Catholic churches in Enfield, a Catholic Mission in Alma Road, Ponders End, and a Catholic Chapel in Cecil Road, Enfield Town. There had been a strong Catholic element in the Ponders End

(1) Rev. Boulden's Memoirs. Unpublished papers. St. James' Vicarage.

district while a large number of Irish labourers worked at the Jute factory. (1)

There was a wide spectrum of Christian churches in Enfield to cater for the religious needs of an increasing population.

The Effects of Urbanisation on Elementary School Provision.

In assessing the issue of the supply of elementary education in the period between 1870 - 1903, it is interesting to look at the literacy figures prior to the Education Act. It is difficult to assess whether a degree of literacy was achieved through the existence of schools or whether learning to read within the bosom of the family was a strong factor. However it is worth noting, with few schools in the parish, the literacy rate was average. Obviously, when the influx of working-class people came, traditional habits of learning at home may have been broken.

There has been considerable discussion among historians as to the degree of literacy among working-class people in the nineteenth century. The evidence of the marriage registers can be used as an elementary test of literacy. It has been estimated that over two-thirds of the working class were able to read by the 1840s. (2) It is generally held that literacy continued to spread, especially among males, as the century progressed.

The Enfield parish register, 1840-44, shows that 39% of the men and 33% of the women did not sign the marriage register. Table III shows an increase in the number of men and women who signed the marriage register, and may well indicate an improvement of literacy in Enfield between 1815-44.

(1) Census Enumerator Schedules 1871.

(2) R.Webb, 'Working class readers in Early Victorian England', English Historical Review, Vol. LXV, 1950.

TABLE III. People who signed their names on the Enfield Parish register.

Date	Number of marriages	Men %	Women %
1815-19	161	49	56
1820-24	134	50	45
1825-29	151	58	57
1830-34	138	45	43
1835-39	133	67	62
1840-44	143	61	67

(1)

TABLE IV. Proportion that made a mark on marriage registers, 1835-44.

Place	Men %	Women %
Tottenham	17	23
Enfield	36	35
Edmonton	36	39
Cheshunt	42	39
Broxbourne	35	48
Waltham Abbey	50	54
South Mimms	49	62

(2)

(1) I am indebted to Tom Lewis for this information based on the Enfield parish registers.

(2) ibid.

The ability to sign the register in Enfield, in comparison with neighbouring parishes, indicates that Enfield did not have a high level of illiteracy. (See Table IV) It is difficult to assess whether the ability to sign the marriage register meant there were a number of schools in the district. Evidence shows that the provision of school accommodation in Enfield followed the rather desultory pattern of rural education in general. There were few schools. The process of learning might well have been pursued at home, an aspect of education that would be disrupted by the process of urbanisation in Enfield.

The pattern of school provision in Enfield, like the pattern of the distribution of houses, reflected the class nature of each neighbourhood.

(1) In order to assess whether educational provision was adequate, or inadequate, in Enfield between 1870 and 1894, it is necessary to examine where the schools were and what residential area they served. The pattern of school provision was closely related to whether a district was middle or working class. In the middle-class areas, there were no Church schools and private schools thrived, whereas all the Church schools were close to working-class districts. This is hardly surprising when elementary education was openly offered to the lowest classes.

In 1870, the following schools existed, serving either urban or agricultural working-class families. St. Andrew's National School for Girls, Boys and Infants served Enfield Town and the surrounding districts. Baker Street School was not government inspected and offered education to both Girls and Boys, in an area of dilapidated slums. Love's Row Infants served the poor cottages behind the parish church but was not government inspected. St. James' National School in the Highway had Girls, Boys and Infant Departments. The Ponders End National School

(1) Walking the present day streets of Enfield with the Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey map can reveal the class nature of any district if original buildings remain.

offered instruction to Girls and Boys, and there was a separate Infants school which did not receive a government grant. The Lock Government Schools served the Royal Small Arms Factory workers, with Departments for Girls, Boys and Infants. St. John's National School served a rural community, as also the Forty Hill Schools. The British School in Chase Side, with Departments for Girls, Boys and Infants, not only served the local community but Nonconformists throughout the parish. St. Michael's, Chase Side, also had three Departments, and recruited children from the newly built Birbeck Estate. The Trent Schools, in Cockfosters, with departments for Girls, Boys and Infants, educated both the children of the rural poor and the children of middle-class families, the two-tiered system reflected in a two-tiered rate of fees.

B. Robson has suggested various methods of determining the high or low status of any given community: examining rateable value, schools with fees over ninepence a week, the numbers of pawnshops and the distribution of disease and epidemic. (1)

Information on the rateable value of land in Enfield is not available, although the survival of nineteenth century housing in Enfield, cross referenced to the Second Edition of the Ordnance Survey Map, can help to pinpoint high and low status areas.

An examination of school fees can point to the level of poverty around the schools. (2) Trent National Boys School, built in 1859 by Bevan of Trent Park, had the highest fees in the parish. The teacher ran two

(1) B. Robson, Urban Analysis (1969).

(2) Evidence has been gleaned from the Enfield file at the Public Record Office, ED 7/88. The file contains the application forms for a school when it seeks to become government inspected. Details of the fees therefore apply to the year of application, leading to a discrepancy of dates which inhibits comparison from school to school.

separate classes, one class of fifteen boys who paid ninepence a week and a class of 25 boys who paid sixpence a week. The architecture of the school could further suggest that it was no ordinary elementary school, it was a finely ornamented building. The Vicar noted that the school catered for both middle class and poor boys in Cockfosters. The St. Andrew's Upper Grade School for Girls, London Road, also charged ninepence a week, although the fees for the kindergarten, in the same building, were less. The fees at Forty Hill National Schools ranged from sixpence to twopence a week, while the fees of the Lock Government Schools ranged from fourpence to threepence a week. Most of the schools charged twopence or less: St. John's Schools, St. Andrew's Schools, Bush Hill Park Voluntary Schools, the British Schools, St. James' Schools, St. Matthew's Schools, the Gordon Lane School and the Ponders End Mixed. The fees of St. Michael's were one penny a week. All the schools except the British Schools charged fees until the passing of Balfour's Education Act.

Kelly's Directories show the location of recorded pawnshops, a further index of poverty. (1) There were several secondhand dealers in Baker Street, Enfield Town, and "Jones and Hobbs", pawnbrokers, stood next to the police station in London Road. There was a pawnbroker in Avenue Road, off Brigadier Hill, which must have served the community of the Birbeck Estate. There was a pawnshop in Enfield Wash and one in Ponders End. The existence of these shops indicate a level of poverty in the neighbourhood.

(1) Kelly's Directories. Suburban North. 1880, 1884, 1888, 1894 and 1898.

Disease and epidemic were the concern of Dr. J. J. Ridge, the Medical Officer of Health, from 1882 - 1908. The rapid increase in the population in the eighties was to create potential problems for the Medical Officer. However the death rate for Enfield did not substantially increase between 1883 and 1900, which commends Dr. Ridge's diligence. (1)

Enfield was a parish with poor sanitary facilities and an insufficient water supply. The Medical Officer of Health was very concerned about the spread of contagious diseases and carefully examined each outbreak for the cause. He linked disease with insanitary buildings. In 1892, there was a severe epidemic of scarlet fever in Bush Hill Park, at the same time as a prevalence of enteric fever and diphtheria in eastern Enfield. J. J. Ridge called for an independent enquiry by Dr. Monckton Copeman, perhaps to give weight to his continuous petitioning of the Enfield Board of Health to improve sanitary conditions. The Report showed that in Bush Hill Park, Ponders End and Enfield Highway many houses had no water supply, no flushing toilets and that the sewage farm at Ponders End was inefficient. (2)

The problem of enteric fever was common to all the low lying areas of the Lea Valley; in the 1890s, Edmonton, Tottenham and Enfield had the worst figures for typhoid in the whole of Middlesex. The Annual Reports of the Medical Officer highlighted the poorest areas where

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- (1) Medical Officer of Health Annual Reports. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.
 - (2) Copeman's Report. 614 (1893) '1892' Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

epidemic raged. (1) There was enteric fever in Ponders End (1891). There was a measles epidemic in Bush Hill Park, necessitating the closing of the voluntary school (1894). Smallpox raged in the Highway in 1895. An epidemic of diarrhoea resulted in eighty deaths (1898) in which sixty three of the victims were under the age of one year. There were thirty one deaths from measles in Enfield Highway (1900). The Reports of the Medical Officer in the 1890s showed more epidemics than the previous decade. The number of epidemics revealed that the poorest areas of Enfield were to be found in the eastern districts, Bush Hill Park, Baker Street and other poor quarters of the Town. There were many insanitary properties in Enfield. The Medical Officer of Health frequently condemned as unfit for human habitation poor housing in areas such as Baker Street and Enfield Highway. Such insanitary dwellings were scattered across the parish and were not concentrated in one specific area. (2) As Dr. Monckton Copeman reported, Enfield had many defective cesspools, homes without a water supply and poor sewage disposal. The middle-class estates of Bycullah, Old Park and Bush Hill Park all had their own water supply to save a dependence on the unreliable municipal supply. (3) The lack of sanitation was not just a problem in old housing, for the Building Inspector for the Enfield Board of Health constantly reported new homes being built without sewer pipes or a water supply. This was

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- (1) Medical Officer of Health Annual Reports. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.
- (2) G. Dalling, 'Through One Man's Eyes'. Unpublished paper. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.
- (3) ibid.

especially true of the housing at Enfield Highway. (1) There is also evidence of poor building techniques, reminiscent of the workmanship revealed in the novel The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist (2). A.Almond, Councillor, was one of the constant offenders against the building regulations.

The subdivision of houses also measure a degree of poverty. Overcrowding could indicate either a mobile population or a poor community. Eastern Enfield was overcrowded; the 1871 Census Enumerator Schedules show that more than one family to a house was a frequent occurrence. Poor families frequently let out rooms to supplement their weekly income. (3) J.J.Ridge expressed deep concern about the high density living in the parish, to which he attributed, in 1900, the high incidence of enteric fever. The areas of overcrowding were to be found in the eastern districts, Bush Hill Park and certain parts of the Town.

Investigation shows that Enfield had considerable areas of poverty and growing districts of poor working-class families. These were the areas in need of elementary education and where the available school accommodation was under the most stress.

The question of whether there was a deficiency of school accommodation in 1870 will be examined in Chapter III, however, an examination using Robson's four criteria, pinpoints the needy districts. In each of these districts, voluntary schools had been established. There were no

(1) Building Inspectors Reports. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

(2) R. Tressell, The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist (1914).

(3) Personal memories of Mr. Andrews, St. George's Road, Enfield.

working-class districts without some forms of elementary school provision. As Enfield's population grew, however, with a growing proportion of working-class people, so the inadequacies of elementary school provision became more pronounced. There was a subsequent strain on the resources of the existing Church schools.

The original communities in Enfield were, of course, affected and changed by this rapid suburban growth. That the new arrivals were mainly the needy poor heightened the possibility of local conflict. The provision of elementary school places was a heavy burden on the parishioners who supported the voluntary system. In the years between 1870-94, there was a massive commitment to keeping apace with the rising population. The Anglican clergy were the champions for better school provision in Enfield. The Rev. Hodson dedicated all his energy and endeavour to maintaining and extending the voluntary school system in Enfield.

The process of urbanisation was radically to change Enfield. Such changes worried, angered and bewildered many of the inhabitants. There were strong feelings of resistance to the development of local government and the growing power of national government. While the population increased so did the need for schools, good sanitation, street lighting, the making up of roads, libraries and other social amenities. There was a considerable vocal section of the community who called for economy and a resistance to such growing responsibilities.

Yet what lay behind a public desire for municipal economy was of deeper and more lasting significance as councils tried to widen their functions, moving from politics to administration, so they were confronted with problems associated with their role, function, power and purposes. In one way or another these concerned the fundamental question of how the urban experience could be improved.

(1)

(1) D. Fraser, Urban Politics of Victorian England (1976), p.153.

The problems of urbanisation had to be confronted, and solutions sought. That process can be traced in the issue of the supply of elementary education in Enfield in the years between the passing of the 1870 Education Act and the setting up of the Enfield School Board, 1894.

CHAPTER TWO.

RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CONFLICTS
INVOLVED IN THE ISSUE OF
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION.

The Effects of Urbanisation on a Local Community.

There were many changes in nineteenth-century society in England and consequently changes in national and local institutions. Enfield was certainly a parish in the process of such change. It is useful to examine the changes taking place in Enfield in the second half of the nineteenth century, for the metamorphosis affected the issue of educational provision. Enfield had been slow to develop, until the parish experienced a rapid increase of population in the 1880s which was to result in a challenge to the power structure in existence and the political emergence of a middle and artisan class elite. The assault on the power structure was no simple process. In the mid-century, the gentry in Enfield were dominant on the Board of Health, the Magistrates Bench, the Board of Guardians and among the laity of the Anglican Church. Within the gentry, who lived almost exclusively in western Enfield, there were close knit ties which could rally support to finance the National schools in time of crisis and equally to take part in the Enfield Hunt. The political views of the gentry were to maintain and conserve society as it existed.

In the period under discussion, there was an influx of both middle and working classes into the area, each drawn to their class-defined residential areas. The growing middle class, many of whom were non-conformist, successfully joined the existing power structure. When Enfield became an Urban District Council, in 1894, the middle class effectively dominated the new instrument of local government. This middle-class assertion to play a role in local politics and challenge the influence of the gentry inevitably resulted in conflicts of both a religious and political nature.

At the same time, the arrival of numerous working-class people in Enfield fundamentally changed the original nature of the community. The existence of newly-enfranchised working people influenced changes in the power structure and produced further areas of social and political conflict. All the institutions of local government in Enfield, in 1870, were designed for a static, rural society. The influx of new parishioners and the subsequent growth of the locality put stress on these institutions. D. Smith, in his article on 'Social conflict and urban education in the nineteenth century,' has defined a hypothesis of social conflict in urban growth which involves both integrated and conflictual perspectives. Society consists of a number of shifting hierarchies of interdependent structural levels which could both accommodate and conflict, e.g. the levels of national government, national church, county administration, local government and local communities. Thus the levels can be integrative or conflictual. (1)

Professor West, in his theory that private schools would have filled the gaps in elementary education eventually filled by State education offers an integrative theory of history. Society evolves to meet new needs. The Marxist interpretation of educational history places more emphasis on the concept of conflict. Pressure and conflict produce change in society. Smith maintains that both forces are at work in an urbanising society and there exists a state of "conflictual interdependence." (2) Such a state can be seen in Enfield in a process of change from an agrarian to an urban society. There was both a gradual integration of newcomers into the existing communities and the growth of new conflictual social and

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- (1) D. Smith, 'Social conflict and urban education in the nineteenth century; a sociological approach to comparative analysis,' in D. Reeder, (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century (1977), p.97.
- (2) D. Reeder, (ed), Urban Education in the Nineteenth Century (1977), p.97.

political demands.

The strongest conflicts developed between the western and eastern districts of Enfield. The district around the parish church of St. Andrew's, in Enfield Town, preserved the old traditional village social structure, with a mixture of wealthy and poor inhabitants. Within that structure, the Vicar, the gentry and the school master played important roles. There was a general deferential approach to the leading citizens, reflected in the pages of Meyers Observer. Eastern Enfield, however, was alienated from this power structure both by distance and political under-representation. The residents in the eastern districts also suffered poor civic amenities. The force of this alienation was reflected in the first campaign speech of J.H. Matthews, a mechanic, when he stood as a candidate for the second School Board election.

The two caucuses of Enfield have met. They were all expected to bow the knee to Enfield Town. They themselves were Enfield Lock and Enfield Lock had a knack of deciding for itself, as in the case of the "Town Hall scheme" some years since, when it was proposed to expend the sum of £20,000 on a Town Hall for Enfield Town.

(1)

The working classes in all parts of Enfield were effectively alienated from the power structure because of the under-representation of their class. However, alternative forms of political expression emerged to challenge the existing local government. The engineers of the Royal Small Arms Factory, a skilled labour force, sought political representation for all working men.

That the conflict between western and eastern Enfield was essentially a class division can be supported by a study of events in the neighbouring

(1) Meyers Observer, 22nd January 1897.

parishes of Edmonton and Tottenham. The administrative centres of Tottenham and Edmonton lay to the east of the districts; while the administrative centre of Enfield lay to the west. With the influx of working-class people in all three parishes, along the line of the Great Eastern Railway from Liverpool Street Station, there developed a separation movement in the western districts. Southgate, an essentially middle-class suburb, separated from the parish of Edmonton in 1881 and Wood Green separated from Tottenham in 1889. (1) That the administrative centre was sited to the west in Enfield may well have kept the former parish intact. However, the localised separation movements indicate the extent of hostility towards the newly growing working-class communities and would further explain the subsequent sense of alienation felt by working people in the east of Enfield. It would seem that Enfield, with its suburban development, and evidence of local political conflict, conforms with D. Smith's analysis of urban conflict.

Education was an area of especial conflict in the late nineteenth century. Education of the lower classes was an issue of political conflict because it was a form of political control. The building of Board schools across the country, following the 1870 Education Act, brought some children into elementary schools for the first time. There followed a process of integration and socialisation.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were few regulative institutions. As the decades passed, the evolution of municipal corporations in urban areas had transferred power from the gentry into

(1) Both separations required private members bills through Parliament.

the hands of the middle classes. Such a process inevitably led to the middle-class dominance on the newly formed institutions of the School Boards.

There was a strong tradition within the Labour Movement of a distrust of the indoctrination inherent in the elementary school system. Why else should the Cooperative Movement offer alternative education to its members.(1) There were firm reasons for distrust. Prior to the 1870 Education Act, control of education had been in the hands of the very religious groups which excluded working-class participation. (2) The newly established School Boards were dominated by middle-class people and the gentry, a further cause for working-class distrust. By the 1890s, working-class candidates were beginning to seek representation on the School Boards on a national level. It was an attempt to monitor the powers of social control in the education system. In 1897 the first working man was elected on to the Enfield School Board. So local elementary schools were the focus of conflict between both, in the first instance the middle classes and the gentry, and, subsequently, when the School Board came, between the middle classes and the working classes.

The politicising of school boards in the 1870s had much in common with the politicising of the Vestries in the 1820s. They were both characterised by a mixture of religious, financial and political issues, and they were both expressions of the Nonconformist search for real religious equality.

(3)

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- (1) The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society set up an Education Committee in 1892.
 - (2) K. Inglis, Churches and the working classes in Victorian England (1963), pp.330~1.
 - (3) D. Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England (1976), p.278.

Education was an area not only of political and religious conflict but an area of conflict between local autonomy and the growing centralisation of national government. The Education Department acquired considerable central control over elementary schools by the issue of Codes and Regulations. Such powers were often resented at the local level.

Between 1870 and 1903, Enfield was in the process of change from an agrarian to an urban society and by the end of the century was finely balanced between the two. This process of urbanisation exacerbated the old and created new conflicts within the communities of Enfield, especially over the issue of elementary education.

The Church of England as an aspect of conflict.

Religious conflict was a deep seated issue in parochial affairs. There were such strong bonds between political affiliation and religious pursuit that the two were often difficult to separate. "Mid nineteenth century England was very heavily charged with religious feeling and religiosity." (1) The degree of importance religion played in Victorian life is somewhat alien to the modern political scene.

The Church of England essentially stood for the status quo; its interests were closely allied to those of the landed gentry. In the rural areas, and Enfield can still be considered rural in 1870, the Church of England was highly influential. In fact, Nonconformists, such as Hugh Trenchard and George Spicer were directly challenging the power of the Church when they sought a role in the power structure of Enfield.

Until the passing of the 1870 Education Act, elementary education in Enfield had been largely in the hands of the Anglican church, after which

(1) G. Kitson Clark , The Making of Victorian England (1962), p.284.

the survival of the Church schools became the predominant concern. The Act was to "fill the gaps" rather than replace the voluntary system, but the growing demands of the Education Department to improve the facilities of the voluntary schools was to frustrate the educational work of the Church. So the local conflict between Church and opponents was mirrored in a national conflict between the Church of England and the growing powers of national government. The files in the Public Record Office trace the growing conflict between the educational aspirations of the Education Department and the financial inability of the Church to comply.

By 1886, it was realised that the Church schools could not survive nationally on the money raised solely from fees, subscriptions and government grant. In Enfield, in the same period, a sudden growth of population further complicated the financial problems of the Church school managers. The whole issue of religious education was forced to the fore, with the Church calling nationally for the Cross Commission to investigate the decline of the voluntary schools. (1) The Commission did not reach a unanimous decision for the Majority and Minority Reports took contradictory stands. (2) There was a body of opinion within the Church calling for rate aid for the voluntary schools while the National Society stood firm against a step which implied a degree of secular control in the field of religious education.

Financial worries were to dominate the clergy in the running of the Church schools in the last two decades of the century. The Church

(1) S. Platten, 'The Conflict over the control of elementary education', British Journal of Educational Studies Vol.XXIII, 1975,p.286.

(2) M. Cruickshank, The Church and State in English Education (1963),p.58.

schools were heavily dependent on the collection of fees, and, as J.S.Hurt has shown in neighbouring Hertfordshire, parents contributed more in fees than the rich subscribers in donations. (1) The inexplicitly worded Education Act of 1891, offering some free places in voluntary schools and the possibility of free education in Board schools, put many Church schools at risk through the loss of fees. The Vicar of Enfield overcame this difficulty by refusing to offer free places in the voluntary schools under his control.

The 1870 Education Act demanded that a census of the number of children and the number of school places should be made across the country. Deficiency of school accommodation brought the threat of a School Board to the local clergy or the prospect of State education to the Nonconformists. It was therefore in the interests of the Church to minimise the problems of accommodation if the voluntary school system was to survive. It was equally in the interests of the Nonconformists to identify areas of deficiency.

The Church of England was deeply committed to the education of the masses and had built the vast majority of voluntary schools in existence by 1870. The Church spent a further £20 million on schools between 1870 and 1895; it was a massive investment in the belief that religion should be an integral part of the education system and that the Church was a factor in social control. This belief put the Church at variance with both the Nonconformist groups, who objected on religious grounds, and many working-class parents, who considered a school on its academic record rather than

(1) J.Hurt, 'Landowners, Farmers and Clergy Financing Rural Education', Journal of Educational Administration and History Vol.I(i), 1968, pp.6-14.

the religious curriculum. (1)

So fundamental was the belief that education and religion were indivisible that it gave courage and determination to the Anglican clergy to sustain the Church schools despite the financial embarrassment and the fierce competition from the Board schools.

Prebendary Hodson was a key figure in the survival of the church schools in Enfield. Vicar of Enfield from 1870-1904, Hodson was an Evangelical, a firm believer that the Church schools would guarantee the future practice of the Anglican religion. He fought for twenty four years to hinder the setting up of a School Board and then continued his struggle after the establishment of the Enfield School Board. "Whilst working faithfully upon the School Board he relaxed no effort to obtain support for the Church and to maintain them in a state of efficiency." (2)

Hodson, a bachelor, came to Enfield as the Vicar at the age of 53. He was a member of a well-known family; one brother was a Rector of Edinburgh Academy, while another brother was a military commander, famous for his violent exploits in suppressing the Indian Mutiny. (3) Hodson took his degree at Trinity College, Cambridge, gaining a first class in the Classical Tripos. He became a missionary priest in the poorest parts of Oxford, 1843-70, where he encouraged the development of elementary education and personally tutored private pupils. When he came to Enfield, in the same year as the Education Act, he was determined to promote religious education in the parish.

(1) P.P. 1861, xxi, Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the State of Popular Education in England (hereafter the Newcastle Commission) Vol.I p.36.

(2) Meyers Observer, 29th July 1904.

(3) G.Hodson, Hodson's Horse. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

Hodson was a man who did not waver from his convictions. Fellow Churchmen found him warm-hearted and generous, while Nonconformists found him harsh and sectarian. He was very fond of children and would empty his pockets to a person in need, and yet borrow more money to give further donations. (1) However to some children he was a figure to be feared. (2) The interests of the Church were well served in the person of George Hodson.

Although Prebendary Hodson was an Evangelical clergyman, the parish of Enfield had not been untouched by tractarian influences. The Rev. Moore Heath was the Vicar of Enfield from 1844-70, a man with High Church leanings. His extreme views antagonised many of the leading families in Enfield, his ultimate offence being secretly to remove the High Pews of the parish church. Gangs of railwaymen, organised by David Waddington, churchwarden and Chairman of the Eastern Counties Railway Company, entered the Church on the night of the eleventh of October, 1853, and demolished all but one of the box pews. The Enfield Vestry consequently refused to collect the rate to pay the salary of the Vicar, and he was eventually forced to leave Enfield. The parish was in the hands of a curate for the five years until Moore Heath officially resigned. (3) When Prebendary Hodson replaced Moore Heath in 1870, he was chosen for his "lowchurchmanship and reactionary political views." (4) He was appointed by Trinity College, Cambridge, to placate an angry Vestry.

(1) Meyers Observer, 23rd July 1904.

(2) Personal recollection of the late Mr. Ford, gardener to George Spicer, and one time pupil at St. Andrew's National School.

(3) G.Dalling, 'Enfield's Railway King' Edmonton Hundred Historical Society Occasional Paper No.38. (1978)

(4) ibid., p.9.

St. James', Enfield Highway, also had strong tractarian connections. The Rev. Fuller Russell, Vicar from 1842-54, was secretary of the Cambridge Camden Society. (1) In the days of Rev. Harman, successor to Fuller Russell, there were many elaborate church ceremonies, including the dramatic night burial of Harman's beloved wife, with a torchlight procession. (2) Harman, much disliked by Hodson, was replaced by the scholarly Rev. Davies. He was Hodson's choice because he held evangelical church services. Rev. Davies was an academic and spiritual man who tired of the constant task of raising money for the National schools.

In 1891, the Rev. Charles Edwin J. Carter was appointed curate at the Royal Small Arms Factory Chapel, an appointment made by the War Department who owned the factory site. The chapel was a Chapel at Ease to St. James', Enfield Highway. Carter was a Highchurchman with strong views on how the Church should adapt to the needs of working men. He was a fierce opponent of Rev. Hodson. In a Lay Helpers Association Conference, 1895, Carter made a vehement attack on Hodson.

His experience was that men of the working classes were most willing and ready helpers. The difficulty he had experienced in this parish had never come from the laity but from the clergy. And opposition had not come in an open way, but in the form of stabs in the back, and some of the clergy present knew all about this.

(3)

Carter, who also took his degree at Trinity College, Cambridge, showed the strong influence of the University Settlement Movement. He was

(1) Rev. Boulden's Memoirs. Unpublished papers. St. James' Vicarage.

(2) ibid.

(3) Meyers Observer, 1st November 1895.

frustrated by the Church's detachment from the needs of working people and "longed for the day when rich and poor will sit down more often at the same board; not as patron and patronised but as members of a brotherhood bound by a common bond of love and devotion to their common master, Jesus Christ." (1) Carter worked in an area entirely made up of working men and he believed that the working class had a right to form Unions, but, he saw them "as old guilds of the Middle Ages, each under the patronage of Bishops." (2)

The Rev. Carter regularly visited the Lock Government Schools, which were not sponsored by the National Society, and at the time of the first School Board election showed himself a supporter of non-denominational religious instruction. There were obviously conflictual views on education within the ranks of the Church of England.

The Nonconformists as an Aspect of Conflict.

The Nonconformists had suffered considerable political and religious frustrations in the early nineteenth century. Gradually restrictions were removed but at the price of great bitterness between the Nonconformists and the Established Church.

Many dissenters sought political freedom as much as religious freedom; they pressed hard for representation in local government. Derek Fraser has carefully traced the role of the Nonconformists in the evolution of the municipal corporations in the great cities. (3) As the century progressed, this role was continued in smaller towns and parishes across the country. There was nonconformist agitation for

(1) The Illustrated London News, 24th March 1894.

(2) ibid.

(3) D.Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England (1976).

both the County Council Act of 1888 and the Local Government Act, 1894. Both pieces of legislation extended the opportunity for political participation to the middle classes.

There is some evidence of the politicising of local institutions in Enfield. The gradual emergence of Nonconformists on the Board of Health, the Board of Guardians and the Magistrates Bench, in the years between 1870 and 1903, indicates a nonconformist pressure for representation. There was evidence of sectarian conflict over the local grammar school. In 1873, a poorly publicised Vestry meeting was held which duly elected all Churchmen to the Board of Governors and promptly banned all dissenter pupils. The Nonconformists were enraged. The Rev. Storer Toms, Congregational Minister of Christ Church, accused Hodson of "fixing" the meeting. Hodson replied that the wind must have blown down the notice of the meeting. (1) The following year, a highly organised campaign brought a nonconformist majority on the Board of Governors and a reversal of policy.

The Nonconformists were particularly sensitive about education. Nonconformist schools had been set up in England but never on the scale of the Church of England. Nonconformists across the country were frequently forced to send their children to church schools where they suffered humiliation and embarrassment at the hands of the Vicar and the teacher. (2) However, a British School had been opened in Enfield as early as 1835. The school registers show that children were drawn from all parts of the parish, travelling considerable distances to Chase Side to receive a non-denominational education.

(1) Meyers Observer, 1st November 1873.

(2) London Quarterly Review, Vol.XXXIV, 1870. p.22.

By 1870, much of the fragile unity of the parliamentary dissenters had been lost because many of their objectives had been achieved. "Nonconformist sectionalism reached its peak with the National Education League. A Nonconformist-dominated movement this was one of the single-cause reform organisations which had been active before the emergence of a national Liberal Party." (1) At the local level, however, the Nonconformists in Enfield had much to achieve. The disputes of the Education Act were forgotten by the legislators but at a parish level local dissenters were still embroiled in religious conflicts. Although the 1870 Act allowed for the secular education of the Board schools, Enfield did not have a School Board until 1894 and until that date, Church schools offered the only form of grant-aided elementary education. The Nonconformists therefore continued to campaign for such alternative education.

The 1870 Education Act had pleased few Nonconformists. There was criticism that the State schools would only supplement the Church schools and not replace them and even some criticism that non-denominational religious instruction should be taught in the Board schools. The issue of elementary education was an area of conflict within the ranks of the Nonconformists themselves.

The British and Foreign School Society decided, after the Education Act, that British schools could be handed over to the newly-formed School Boards. The Rev. Storer Toms was pleased to announce at a large public meeting in Enfield that most of the Committee of the local British school would favour a School Board. (2) So the nonconformist

(1) D. Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery (1972), p.5.

(2) Meyers Observer, 17th August 1878.

population stood clearly for a School Board, while the Rev. Hodson stood for denominational religious instruction.

The conflict between Church and Dissenter was heightened by personal animosities; there was great bitterness between Storer Toms and Hodson. An incident following the passing of the 1880 Burials Act, which won Nonconformists the right to burial in the parish churchyard, can serve to illustrate such conflict. Hodson personally barred the way of a coffin bearing a deceased member of Christ Church and turned the procession away from the churchyard, because the full forty eight hours notice had not been served. (1) There were, in fact, many instances nationally of "scandal" following the Gladstonian Burials Act. (2)

The Nonconformists had a small role to play in the local power structure in the seventies and eighties and they sought a further sphere of influence in the future creation of a School Board.

The Emergent Middle Class as an aspect of Conflict.

Enfield saw the gradual emergence of the middle class in the power structure in the period from 1870. A comparison of the occupations of the members of the first Enfield Board of Health, 1850, the Board in 1894 and the councillors on the Enfield Urban District Council of 1900 reveals a considerable change.

(1) Christ Church papers.

(2) S. Maccoby, English Radicalism, 1886- 1914 (1953), p. 488.

1850 Enfield Board of Health

Ellis Hall.....wheelwright
Thomas Knight.....farmer
Mordant Monroe.....farmer
William Ironside.....nurseryman
John Moore Heath.....Vicar of Enfield
James Meyer.....Esquire
Daniel Harrison.....Esquire
William Everett.....gentleman
John Miller.....doctor
R. Bevan.....gentleman
Henry Draper.....builder
John Trego.....gentleman.

(1)

1894 Enfield Board of Health

Peter Rumney.....gentleman
J. Penny.....doctor
E. Marshall.....unknown
W. Goodman.....gentleman
Amos Matthews.....nurseryman
A.A.Sawyer.....surveyor
Rochford.....nurseryman
J.J.Wilson.....farmer
J.Warren.....gentleman
G.R.Wright.....miller

(2)

1900 Enfield Urban District Council

J.J.Wilson.....farmer
J.H.Sanders.....land agent
A.Sawyer.....surveyor
T.Almond.....builder
W.Hall.....unknown
T.Young.....unknown
A.Bowyer.....auctioneer
H.Trenchard.....gentleman
T.Coward.....brick manufacturer
D.Weston.....bill poster
G.Webb.....civil engineer

(3)

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- (1) C. Whitaker, An Illustrated Historical, Statistical and Topographical account of the Urban District of Enfield (1911), pp. 341-2.
- (2) Board of Health Minutes, 1894. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.
- (3) Minutes of the Enfield Urban District Council. Clerk to the Council, London Borough of Enfield.

In a period of fifty years, the middle class came to dominate the local power structure. Fraser has traced a similar trend in the municipalities of the northern cities; the rural nature of Enfield meant that such development came later in the century. (1)

The middle class had political and social objectives often very dissimilar to the previously powerful landed interest. Although they sought to consolidate their area of influence and power, the new political masters were less threatened by the changes in contemporary society. In fact, they could benefit by such changes. It is interesting to note that some members of the Enfield Urban District Council, 1900, were involved in the profitable business of land speculation, buying up small plots of land, building working-class accommodation and thereby taking an active part in the process of urbanisation. (2)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, an identifiable lower middle class emerged, as poor as the working class but isolated from the Labour Movement. (3) The small shopkeeper was under threat from the multiple stores, the Cooperatives and the prepackaging industry, while the white collar worker was threatened by the flood of School Board scholars on the labour market who could effectively compete with private school qualifications. In face of such insecurity, the lower middle class were status conscious, aspiring to the social life of the middle classes and a new political force within the community.

There is no evidence to link either Liberalism or Conservatism with any

(1) D.Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England (1976).

(2) Building Surveyor's Reports. Enfield Board of Health and Urban District Council Minutes. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

(3) G. Crossick, The Lower Middle Class in Britain (1976).

particular economic group. (1) That the middle class dominated local government in Enfield by 1900 did not establish any degree of political unity, for there was fierce political rivalry at both local and General elections.

The middle class had not only entered the political arena but the social life of Enfield as well. They played an important role in Church and Chapel activities within the parish. Middle-class organisations, such as the Philanthropic Society, the Ladies District Visiting Society and the Enfield Literary Union, all thrived. (2) In a process of accommodation, the middle class integrated with the existing social life.

Dennis Smith has investigated the part played by the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie in the development of the educational system in Birmingham. (3) He found that the middle classes were keen to develop education for the working class, although they did not intend to send their children to the same schools. Smith found three classifications of middle-class educational ambitions: the prosperous business families sent their children to boarding school, the professional classes sent their children to the Classical section of the Grammar school and the small tradesmen sent their sons for a commercial education. While there is little evidence to prove that the same pattern existed in Enfield, for indeed Enfield did not include prosperous business families among its ranks, there was a reformed Grammar school offering a Classical education at six pounds per annum and a large number of commercial private schools, centred mainly in Enfield Town.

(1) D.Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England (1976), p.195.

(2) Florence Dugdale, daughter of Mr. Dugdale, (schoolmaster at St. Andrew's National School), and the second wife of the writer Thomas Hardy, was a regular attender at the Enfield Literary Union.

(3) D.Smith, 'The urban genesis of school bureaucracy: a transatlantic comparison' in R.Dale, G.Esland and M.MacDonald, (eds), Schooling and Capitalism (1976), pp.68-74.

Without the list of subscribers, it is difficult to assess how far the middle class supported the voluntary schools. In the period 1870-94, Hodson and other clergymen continuously commented on the middle-class residential movement out of the area and the subsequent decline of Church school subscriptions. However a close examination of the families in the essentially middle-class districts show no such class exodus. The clergy must have been bewailing the loss of Anglican members rather than the loss of wealthy families in the area.

The lower middle class were forced, by lack of funds, to use the elementary school system, supporting the schools by the payment of fees. Members of this class were appreciative of the importance of education and would select the schools with the best academic record for their children. Many middle-class families, on a national level, supported the Board schools because of their reputation of quality. If the quality of the Church schools in Enfield was dubious, members of the lower middle class were possibly sympathetic to the need for a School Board in Enfield.

All sections of the middle classes were to play a part in the conflicts over educational provision in Enfield.

The Politicising of Local Institutions as an aspect of Conflict.

Fraser has put forward the argument that all local institutions were politicised from early in the nineteenth century; his aim is to counter-balance the view that political life was initiated in Parliament and slowly permeated through to the local scene. Fraser had studied the northern cities where local political development was precipitate. Enfield was a rural community for the first half of the nineteenth century and intense political conflict came later with urbanisation.

However, Fraser made four main points in his conclusion that are applicable to the second half of the century in Enfield: that local affairs had become part of the national political conflict by the end of the century, that local government office was attractive to men denied alternative participation, that men sought political power to pursue a certain policy and that the politicising of local institutions raised questions about the nature of authority and the exercise of power in the urban community. (1)

There is considerable evidence to show that Fraser's conclusion was also applicable to the state of affairs in Enfield. That a national view, on both politics and more specifically educational policy, was predominant among Enfield "worthies" was certainly true. The press reports in Meyers Observer on local and national elections showed that national issues were a substantial part of electioneering. National politics definitely dominated the activities of the main political parties.

J.H.Matthews, elected to the Enfield School Board in 1897, was frequently to complain that the local Liberal Party meetings on issues of foreign policy were singularly out of place in working-class areas. In matters of educational affairs, the arguments put forward in national debate were reiterated in the Enfield School Board elections of 1894 and 97. Through the development of the printed media, people were better informed on both national and local matters.

It was certainly true that many of the men who sought public office in the Enfield Urban District Council were not men of sufficient substance to take part in national politics. A considerable income was necessary

(1) D.Fraser, Urban Politics in Victorian England (1976), pp.279-285.

to become a Member of Parliament, while even standing as a School Board candidate could cost several hundred pounds.

Without the political manifestos of candidates in local government elections, it is difficult to determine the motives behind the candidatures.

Hugh Trenchard stood for the Enfield Board of Health to represent the Liberal and Nonconformist interest. Dr. Ridge, the Medical Officer of Health, stood for the Board, in 1881, on the platform of Temperance.

After the first School Board election, men of the Enfield Highway cooperated to elect a working man as candidate for the next local elections. It is nonetheless difficult to assess whether a man stood for a political party or for a personal policy. The development of the Trades Union and Labour movement in Enfield was an example of a general querying of the powers of local government. The nineties saw the growth of working-class participation in local government. The election of a working man onto the Enfield School Board was of especial significance. The concept was also developing that elected officers were responsible to the Ward they represented, this was particularly true of the Councillors representing Ordnance Ward, Enfield Highway, partially resulting from the lively political interests of the men at Enfield Lock.

The Victorian period began with local politics dominating the community and ended with the predominance of national politics onto the local scene. Personal conflict could still be as powerful as organised political conflict, while the Liberal and Conservative parties were fierce rivals in national and local elections.

The Liberal Party as an aspect of Conflict.

The Liberal Party, nationally, was an uneasy alliance of interests with little common bond. There were strong divisions between High Churchmen,

Nonconformists and Radicals, which were largely class divisions. (1)

The Liberal leadership, for much of the period under the aegis of William Gladstone, was detached from the Parliamentary Party. (2) Similarly, the Parliamentary Party was detached from the constituencies. Party organisation at a local level was slow to emerge. The Liberal Registration Society was set up in 1860 to help areas that did not keep registers of Liberal electors. The events of the General Election of 1880 in Enfield revealed that registers of voters were kept by both political parties. The existence of an Enfield Committee to elect Herbert Gladstone, as the County member, at that election, further indicated a degree of organisation. (3)

There was also strong support for the Liberation Society in Enfield. The links formed by the membership of the Society may have been an important factor in the campaign for a School Board in Enfield. A.G.Kitching, Chairman of the Enfield Liberal Association, was a member of the Liberation Society. Carvell-Williams, later to play a part in the parliamentary agitation for a School Board in Enfield, was Secretary of the Society. "By Liberationists is, of course, meant members or supporters of that famous Disestablishment body, the Society for the Liberation of Religion from State-Patronage and control. It had its own important monthly The Liberator." (4)

There were two main Liberal groups in Enfield, both dominated by local notables and often in conflict. Firstly there was the Liberal

(1) J.Vincent, The Formation of the Liberal Party, 1857-68 (1966), pp.58-90.

(2) D.Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Disraeli (1972).

(3) Meyers Observer, April 1880.

(4) S.Maccoby, English Radicalism, 1833-1886 (1953), p.485.

Association and secondly the Radical Liberal organisation. Middle-class Liberals dominated both the groups for there is little indication of any democratic processes, and although working men were members of both groups, working men rarely held executive office. A notable exception was J.J. Matthews who held the office of auditor in the Radical Liberal organisation.

Gradually Liberals came to play a part in the local power structure. In 1870, all the magistrates at the Enfield Petty Sessions were Anglican and Conservative; by 1898, there were four Liberal magistrates. These men were W.O. Clough, a Liberal M.P., A.G. Kitching, a member of the Stock Exchange, G. Spicer, later to become Chairman of the Enfield School Board and T.G. Widdicombe. (1) The Liberals also met with some success in the Urban District Council elections. The Liberal local newspaper, The Chronicle, proudly announced that in the elections of 1898 the Liberals had increased votes all across the parish and that the Liberals had a working majority on the Council. (2) Liberals were also successfully elected to the Board of Guardians, including men of humbler origin such as E.J. Betts, undertaker at Enfield Highway. On a national scale, the middle-class Liberals were not prepared to welcome the new working-class voters into their organisation. This exclusiveness was eventually to lose the Liberal Party much of the working-class vote. Despite such social rebuffs, workingmen's Liberal Clubs grew up across the country as early as the 1860s. (3) Radical Liberal Clubs were set up in both Ponders End and Enfield Highway in the 1890s.

(1) Meyers Observer. Reports of the Enfield Petty Sessions.

(2) The Chronicle, 7th April 1898.

(3) P. Stansky, Ambitions and Strategies: The Struggle for the Leadership of the Liberal Party in the 1890s (1964).

Meyers Observer recorded their regular meetings, with such speakers as Sir Charles Dilke, local Liberal Members of Parliament and eminent Fabians. Enfield's closeness to London must have been an advantage when seeking suitable speakers.

The membership of these Clubs was predominantly of the artisan class. The skilled engineers of the Royal Small Arms Factory were prominent on the Club committees, using the organisation to campaign for the improvement of living standards in eastern Enfield. It was left, however, to such organisations as the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society and the Enfield Highway Ratepayers Association to sponsor working-class candidates for local elections.

The issue of elementary education was of great interest within the Liberal Party. The National Education League had been formed among Liberal Nonconformists to campaign for a national system of education.(1) After the disbanding of the Education League, Liberals still campaigned for School Boards in their local areas. In Enfield there is evidence to show that the Liberals pressed for a School Board throughout the twenty four years following the 1870 Education Act.

The Conservative Party as an aspect of Conflict.

The Conservative Party was more successful than the Liberal Party at winning loyalty and support at constituency level. Although the Party was firmly rooted in the landed interest, it looked, as the franchise was extended, to the middle classes and subsequently to the working classes for a new power base. (2)

(1) F.Adams, The History of the Elementary School Contest (1882).

(2) E.Feuchwanger, Disraeli, Democracy and the Tory Party (1968).

Organisation at constituency level was of key importance to success at the elections. A Central Office was opened in London, followed by the setting up of Conservative Clubs across the country. A Conservative Association was established in Enfield after the General Election of 1880. (1) Clubs proliferated throughout the parish. There was a Conservative Club at Enfield Highway, next to the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society store, a Club in Ponders End, a Constitutional Club in Bush Hill Park and another in Enfield Town. These Clubs were situated in lower middle-class and working-class areas and indicate that the Conservative Party, by following a policy of reform, had successfully found new supporters.

Lord Randolph Churchill formed the Primrose League to offer an active role in Party politics to both middle-class and working-class supporters. The Primrose League was very active in Enfield and the organisation must have benefitted the Party at times of elections. The Conservative Party adapted to the process of urbanisation by absorbing the newly arriving voters. The approach of leading Conservative politicians was sometimes rather patronising to the lower classes. When Colonel Bowles, M.P., shared a platform with Keir Hardie M.P. at Enfield Highway, he told his audience that the workers should not choose leaders from among their own ranks but should choose "honest and straight forward men." (2)

The Conservative Party was successful in Enfield. After the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885, the Enfield Division of Middlesex was represented by the Conservative Viscount Folkestone. His successor,

(1) Meyers Observer, 19th June 1880.

(2) ibid., 3rd February 1893.

Colonel Bowles, resident at Forty Hall, then served as Conservative Member from 1889-1906. Bowles was very active in local affairs, living within the constituency, and involved himself on the County Council's Technical Education Committee as well as supporting the local Church schools.

On the local scene, the Conservatives dominated the Enfield Board of Health throughout its existence. The Liberals offered more of a challenge when the Urban District Council was set up in 1894. The Conservative interest dominated the Board of Guardians, where the Anglican clergy were strongly represented, and the Magistrates Bench.

The Conservatives had strong opinions on elementary education, supporting the voluntary system. The Conservative Party, when it came to power in 1894, introduced educational legislation vital to the survival of the Church schools.

The Rev. Hodson pressed the supporters of the Conservative Party to give generously to the cause of the voluntary schools in the twenty four years following the Education Act.

The Working Classes as an aspect of Conflict.

By the end of the century, the working class had begun to take an active part in local political life. The working classes were impatient to change their own living conditions. (1) The working class in Enfield, with little access to middle-class political or social organisations, threw up their own organisations with a strong local identity. Thus working men gained the necessary experience eventually to participate in local politics. They gained access to the local

(1) T.Tholfson, Working Class Radicalism in Mid Victorian England (1976).

power structure, not through national political parties, but through alternative organisations such as the Cooperative Movement, the Ratepayers Association and the Nonconformist churches.

Although there were several working-class districts in Enfield, by the nineties, leadership came from the Enfield Highway area. The influx of working-class families concentrated on Enfield Highway, Ponders End, Bush Hill Park, Chase Side and the Lancaster Road area. There is little evidence of working-class activity in the Chase Side and Lancaster Road area. Bush Hill Park was a new community growing rapidly but with many men commuting into London for work. Although working men joined the Bush Hill Park Liberal and Radical Association and became members of the Avenue Hall, a focus of Liberal activities, middle-class men dominated the committees. There is little evidence of working-class leadership, although a brief reference in the Minutes of the Avenue Hall to a request by socialists to hire the Hall would suggest much potential evidence has been lost. (1) Ponders End was an old community that had grown around the riverside factories, the brickworks and the market garden industry. There, leaderships came not from working men but from small shopkeepers and businessmen who, as members of the Ponders End Ratepayers Association, pressed for improved local amenities. The skilled men from the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield Lock took on the role of political leadership and articulated working-class discontent. Not only were "The Lockies", in their bowler hats and bombazine tail coats, members of the so-called Labour Aristocracy, which made them men of some distinction, but they were men recruited from the gunmaking towns of the Midlands, who had seen the municipal revolution in

(1) Minutes of the Avenue Hall. Care of the Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church, Main Avenue, Enfield.

Birmingham and the establishment of School Boards in former places of work. (1)

The engineers were not only political leaders, they were a dynamic force in the generation of religious and social activities in the working-class communities. Alternative organisations were established. The community at Enfield Highway was sufficiently close knit to sustain a Cooperative Society. The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society was founded in 1872 by a group of engineers and after the dismissal of the first Secretary for embezzlement, became a commercial success.

(2) The Cooperative Movement was based on the concept of self help and mutual respect. It was a democratically-run organisation, with a change of committee every three months and regular meetings which all members were obliged to attend or face a fine. The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society was the most important group of all the organisations that expressed working-class discontent.

The Enfield Lock Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers was formed in 1865. The Union was a conservative force, resisting the introduction of both unskilled labour and the introduction of piece-work. The Minutes of the Union are so brief that it is impossible to assess what role the Union played in seeking better conditions for the working classes. (3) However many of the engineers who were members were well known figures in the fight for political expression and

(1) Birmingham had a School Board in 1870, Wednesbury 1871, Willenhall 1876, Darlaston 1883 and West Bromwich 1886. Skilled men came to Enfield to work from all these Midland Towns, as the Enumerator Schedules of the 1871 Census shows.

(2) Enfield Highway Cooperative Society Minutes. Head Office, Enfield Highway Cooperative Society, Ordnance Road, Enfield.

(3) Minutes of the Enfield Lock Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers 1865 to present day. District Office of the A.E.U.W., Fore Street, Edmonton.

social parity.

The Enfield Highway Ratepayers Association represented men who owned property. Many of the engineers not only owned their own homes but rented out other properties to fellow workers. Not exclusively working class, it was an instrument of change for the benefit of working people, pressing the Board of Health, and then the Urban District Council, to improve the amenities of eastern Enfield. In 1894, the Ratepayers Association demanded representation on the School Board, the Urban District Council and the Board of Guardians.

Many working men played important roles in the local Anglican churches and the Nonconformist chapels; R.H.MacFarlane, President of the A.S.E. in 1899, was Secretary of the Enfield Highway Congregational Church, while Robert Brookman, also a member of the A.S.E. was a sidesman at the Royal Small Arms Factory Chapel. Both are examples of working men acquiring status within the religious community.

The social clubs in the working-class areas were not only expressions of working-class identity but they offered working people further channels in which to gain experience of leadership. The Volunteer Movement was strong in the Highway, with men from the Royal Small Arms Factory drilling in the 3rd Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, Enfield Lock Department. The Albany Cycling Club, most of whose members were R.S.A.F. workers, organised regular cycling trips under the patronage of William Gundry, a leading Radical Liberal in western Enfield. The Victorian Swimming Club taught youngsters to swim in a small pool fed by the River Lea. (1) There were football and cricket clubs. The

(1) Although Enfield had no public swimming pool, the workers of the Royal Small Arms Factory raised money to build Enfield Lock Indoor Swimming Pool, which opened June 1895.

Factory itself was a centre for social life; the factory school, the Chapel, the Mechanics Institute and the Sheridan Theatre were all housed on the island site. The Rev. Carter, curate at the Factory Chapel, was renowned for his Christmas pantomimes, held every year at the Factory theatre.

Professor B.Simon has shown in Education and the Labour Movement that much of the political and Trade Union activity of the working class in the 1880s and 90s also embodied aspirations for better educational facilities in elementary schools. (1) Certainly the election of a working man at the second School Board Election in Enfield can be seen as an expression of working-class aspirations. Subsequently the growing working-class demand for decent schools was only part of the general expression of discontent. There was strong discontent with the lack of civic amenities in the eastern part of the parish on the whole.

The engineers played a leading role in the political and cultural life of the Enfield Highway community. Obviously, they were the minority among the work force, but through their respect for learning, they led the working-class demand for better school provision in Enfield. The influence of these skilled men could be seen in the establishment of the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society Education Committee in 1892, with evening classes, a lending library and the Society's own publications.

There is little evidence of a working-class demand for a School Board in Enfield. Working men did not keep records. However the first School Board election was to be a catalyst in the movement towards working-class participation in local affairs.

(1) B.Simon, Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920 (1965).

CHAPTER THREE

DEFICIENCY OF SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION AS AN ASPECT OF CONFLICT 1870-94.

An examination of the whole issue of deficiency of elementary school accommodation is confused by the lack of definition. The lack of clear definition created problems too for those Victorian gentlemen in Enfield who sought to wrestle with the problem of matching provision of school accommodation to that of the demand. The main difficulty was to assess the demand.

A deficiency of school accommodation was the number of working-class children who were not attending a government inspected school. Children who attended private or Dame schools were part of the official deficiency. There were further problems caused by the overlap of factory legislation and educational legislation which hampered a quick calculation of deficiency; children were officially to attend school between the ages of 5-13, but many children spent only a few years in school while others began their education as early as the age of three. So the task of assessing the degree of deficiency in any parish was fraught with difficulties. Furthermore, calculating deficiency had strange anomalies; when the Rev. Cotton closed his dissenting school in Ponders End, claiming a deficiency and the need for a School Board, no official deficiency was acknowledged because the hundred pupils had not previously been officially counted. (1)

Calculating the numerical deficiency of school accommodation was not the same thing as establishing how many children genuinely were not receiving an elementary education. The School Attendance Officer was aware of the children truanting from school but he had poor facilities for calculating how many children in the district were working or were unrecorded on any school register.

(1) PRO ED 16/209. 1882.

It can therefore be hazarded that the official numbers of children needing school places were never very accurate. It would explain why inconsistencies occurred between one official and another and between official calculations and private house-to-house census figures (1). The question of deficiency of school accommodation was as controversial in 1870 as it is among historians today. The premise of the 1870 Education Act was a large deficiency in the country. The Liberal government of the day was under great pressure from the National Education League, whose propaganda stated there was a large number of children out of school. The Conservative Party, in opposition, supported the Church's stand in favour of the voluntary system and therefore the optimistic Church figures for school provision in England and Wales.

The whole dialogue on deficiency was fraught with conflicting numerical calculations. When, in 1869, W.E.Forster initiated a survey of Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester, the deficiency was found to be 25% of children of school age. Forster was challenged by Robert Montagu, in Parliament, over these figures, for Montagu argued that children did not spend eight years in school and therefore a deficiency of 20,000 school places in Liverpool alone was highly inaccurate. If the Education Act had made education compulsory for children between the ages of five and ten, then the calculation of deficiency would have been simpler. The situation, however, was complex, for factory legislation allowed the employment of minors, and some industries offered part-time education and it was also possible for parents to send their children out to work if they had reached a certain standard of education.

(1) The Ponders End Ratepayers Association made a local census in 1894 to challenge the calculations of the Enfield School Board.

Forster believed there was a large deficiency nationally which the Church would never be able to supply. He therefore introduced the "Dual System." Not surprisingly, the Church, threatened by the possibility of School Boards and secular education, responded by supplying one million school places between 1871-76. (1) It was an incredible achievement. Once forced to recognise the degree of deficiency, the Church built schools on a large scale, until there were 14,000 Church schools in England and Wales. (2)

In 1870, the London Quarterly Review published that there was a national deficiency of 400,000. (3) While politicians and journalists argued over the issue, the Education Department carried out a national survey, following the passing of the Education Act, which showed a national deficiency of two million. (4) Contemporary political and religious factors so strongly influenced opinions that it is difficult today to assess the validity of statistics offered by Victorian officials. The premise of Forster's Education Act was rightly based on an assumption of gross deficiency.

Many historians have voiced a belief in a large national deficiency. M. Cruickshank stated that newly formed School Boards were shocked to

(1) N.Morris, '1870: the Rating Option'. History of Education, Vol.I (i) 1972, p.29.

(2) M.Cruickshank, Church and State in English Education (1963), p.47.

(3) London Quarterly Review, Vol.XXIV 1870, p.9.

(4) N.Morris, '1870: the Rating Option'. History of Education, Vol.I (i) 1972.

find how many children existed when they carried out local surveys; in London 120,000 children were found not to be in school, 20,000 in Leeds and 16,000 in Birmingham. (1) E.G.West, however, has challenged the bland acceptance of a large school deficiency. (2) He argues that many children attended private schools, which, because they were not government inspected, did not feature in official statistics. Citing the Newcastle Commission's figures, West maintains that more children attended government-inspected schools than was officially estimated in the last-minute survey of the four industrial towns but that they stayed at school for only five years. Indeed the 1851 Education Census did indicate a sharp drop in school attendance after the age of ten.

When contemplating the issue of deficiency in the parish of Enfield, it has been useful to apply the lines of debate pursued by such historians as M.Cruickshank and E.West. The conflicting calculations of both the number of school children and the number of school places in Enfield, 1870-94, have limited interpretation.

There are two main sources of material on the issue of deficiency in Enfield, which are the files of the National Society and the Education files in the Public Record Office. The evidence from these two sources is conflictual. There was an obvious frankness about the problems of school accommodation between the clergy and the National Society. The clergy needed to impress the Society with the

(1) M.Cruickshank, Church and State in English Education (1963), p.39.

(2) E.West, Education and the State (1965).

financial problems of the Church schools in order to gain the small grants the Society offered. The correspondence between the clergy and the Education Department revealed a different relationship. To the National Society the clergy spoke continually of the lack of sufficient school accommodation while to the Education Department there was a constant denial of deficiency. In the 1870s and 80s, there are strong indications that the Department was influenced by the false optimism of the Enfield clergy. Yet by the 1890s, there was a Departmental hostility towards the voluntary schools in Enfield, personified in the view of Acland, Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education.

The influence of the Enfield clergy on Department decisions raises the question on how far a declaration of deficiency depended on the force or lack of force of character of leading local personalities. Local research into individual districts or towns show discrepancies and variations from the national norm. Burnley was a northern industrial town which elected a School Board, in 1871, but, being well supplied with voluntary schools, had no school deficiency until 1890. The School Board, in fact, had been specifically elected to support the voluntary system and check the building of secular schools in the area. (1) Other parishes, such as Edmonton and Tottenham, neighbours to Enfield, were forced by the Education Department to elect a School Board because deficiency was so severe. Events in Burnley indicate that the local clergy were highly organised in calling for a School

(1) M.Young, 'Burnley School Board, 1871-90' M.ED thesis, Manchester 1973.

Board and dominating it to the advantage of the voluntary system.

Deficiency was so large in Edmonton and Tottenham that local individuals could not effectively resist a School Board. There is considerable evidence in Enfield that strong personalities, particularly that of the Vicar of Enfield, influenced the official calculation of deficiency and held off a School Board for twenty four years.

The most interesting fact about the development of elementary education in Enfield was that it remained in voluntary hands until 1894 despite the urbanising nature of the area. This was a considerable achievement for the Church school managers, as the population was growing rapidly and there was great pressure to supply school accommodation. It is difficult to assess which factors kept a School Board in Enfield at bay. Perhaps the voluntary schools offered an adequate supply of school places. Perhaps the private schools effectively filled the gaps. Or more likely, the Church Party in Enfield minimised the problem of inadequate school accommodation to secure the survival of the Church schools.

The role of the private schools in the school provision in Enfield.

When considering the issue of deficiency, the role of the private schools in educational provision is an important factor. It is also an indeterminate factor for the private schools were neither officially inspected nor required to keep registers.

E.G. West, by offering an extreme view of the potential role of private schools in the elementary system, has focused an interest in this sector of education. Common day schools are worthy of careful investigation as should the critical statements made by the Inspectorate and

the Newcastle Commission. (1)

The 1851 Education Census received 29,425 returns from private schools, of which over half were Dame Schools. The returns for Enfield are included in the Edmonton Union Returns, which embraced Enfield, Edmonton and Tottenham. (See Table V.)

Given that the number of private schools in the Edmonton Union was 107, it is possible to make a projection of how many private schools were to be found in Enfield in 1851. If the number of private schools is divided by the percentage proportion of population of each of the three districts of Enfield, Edmonton and Tottenham within the Edmonton Union, then it could be projected that Enfield had approximately 36 known private schools, Edmonton 37 and Tottenham 34. (2) Such a calculation is supported by the general local history knowledge that all three districts had a reputation for a number of private schools, Tottenham especially.

Using the evidence of the advertising columns of the local paper Meyers Observer and Kelly's Trade Directories, it is possible to graph the number of advertised private schools in Enfield 1851-1893. The total number of schools per year was considerably lower than the total of private schools in the Education Census of 1851, which showed that a third of all children recorded as attending school were privately educated. (The Census however did not differentiate between middle-class and working-class schools.) The average number of pupils per private school can be estimated as 22 pupils, by the division of the number of

(1) D.Leinster MacKay, 'Dame Schools. A Need for Review' British Journal of Educational Studies, Vol.XXIV Feb., 1976.

(2) The actual Return slips for the Edmonton Union are lost.

private pupils recorded in the Education Census of 1851 by the number of private schools. It is therefore roughly possible to calculate how many pupils were in private schools through the period from the Education Census to the calling of the Enfield School Board. (See Table VI).

In the period 1870-94 there were 45 recorded private schools in Enfield, four of which thrived while the remainder survived for only a year or two. They therefore offered little permanent alternative education to the existing elementary schools.

The title of "private school" covered a wide range of institutions; middle-class schools for boys, boarding schools, ladies seminaries, preparatory schools and Dame schools. Horace Mann considered that most of the private schools, at least over 13,000 nationally, offered inferior education. (1)

Most of the private schools in Enfield offered education to middle-class children, as "The Middle Class School" in Silver Street would suggest. (2) The advertised fees of many private schools also revealed the nature of the school. (3)

There was a nonconformist private school set up in Ponders End in 1861, following the exclusion of dissenter children from the St. James' Schools. The Ponders End Commercial and Grammar School offered a liberal and unsectarian curriculum, with fees comparable to those of the Enfield Grammar School. Each subscriber to the school could

(1) Education Census, 1851, p. xxxiii.

(2) Meyers Observer, 1st October 1872.

(3) The Chapel House Academy at Enfield Highway offered a commercial education at six guineas a quarter.

TABLE V. The Returns of the Education Census, 1851, for the Edmonton Union.

Type of school	No. of schools	No. of pupils	% school children
Public	52	4,597	66
Private	107	2,405	34

TABLE VI. Projected number of pupils in private schools in Enfield, 1851-93.

Date	No. of schools	Minimum no. of 10 per school.	Maximum no. of 22 per school.
1851	11	110	242
1859	8	80	176
1862	15	150	330
1867	14	140	308
1870	12	120	264
1878	15	150	330
1882	14	140	308
1886	13	130	286
1890	11	110	242
1893	14	140	308

nominate a pupil to be received at half the price of other weekly scholars. The schools may therefore have educated some working-class children. (1)

Few private schools were held in purpose-built properties, this would suggest that the private schools held in houses would tutor only a small number of pupils. Most of the private schools catered for girls rather than boys. (See Table VII.)

The Enumerator Schedules of the 1871 Census showed a large school deficiency in Ponders End, Enfield Highway and the rural districts. There is evidence to show this deficiency continued throughout the period under discussion. If E.G. West's thesis that private schools would have filled the gaps in the elementary education system was correct, then it is in these areas of deprivation that the most private schools should be recorded. This was not the situation. The private sector was not apparently offering alternative elementary education to the working-class population of Enfield. (See Table VII).

There is some evidence however of elementary private schools in existence although the nature of the education offered is unknown.

There were several small schools in Enfield Town. In 1846, an Infant School was built by the ladies of St. Andrew's Church in Baker Street. An extension to the school was added in 1872, for a short while the school was government inspected, and then approval was withdrawn. In 1859, a Mission Ragged School was also set up in Baker Street for the poorest children. Twenty to thirty children were taught the simple

(1) Meyers Observer, 1st May 1861.

TABLE VII. The number of private schools in Enfield, 1870-94.

District in Enfield	Boys schools	Girls schools
Chase Side, The Town	2	14
Baker Street, The Town	4	3
Ponders End	2	4
Enfield Highway	1	3
Schools in newly built areas	2	13
TOTAL	11	37

(1)

(1) Information from Kellys' Trade Directories and Meyers Observer.

rudiments of education and the Word of God. (1) The Charity School, founded in 1808, and named the Enfield Church School of Industry, trained forty young girls to be domestic servants. The school was condemned by the Education Department. (2)

There were many dissenting schools in Enfield Town and the eastern districts. These schools had no contact with the Education Department, although they catered for quite large numbers of pupils. T. Laqueur has argued that literacy rates among the working class in the eighteenth and nineteenth century were high because of a strong tradition of self help. Instead of looking to the number of official schools, Laqueur suggested that "It is more profitable instead to concentrate on the popular interest in literacy which spawned a highly varied and elaborate network of informal schools and other means of learning to read and write." (3) It can be argued that the dissenting schools were popular schools, rooted in the community, and part of a popular tradition. (4)

The rural districts of Enfield were also deficient in official school provision, and yet only three small private schools apparently flourished. Meyer, Chairman of the Enfield Board of Health, ran a private school in Forty Hill until his death in 1894. J.W.Bosanquet, of Clayesmore, ran a private school in Flash Lane for twenty years,

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- (1) Meyers Observer, August 1859. (The newspaper was for many years a monthly paper).
 - (2) PRO ED 16/209. In a letter written by Prebendary Hodson dated September 26th 1872, the Vicar mentions that the Enfield School of Industry (condemned for inefficient teaching) would have a new Certificated teacher at Xmas.
 - (3) T.Laqueur, 'The Cultural Origins of Popular Literacy 1500-1850', Oxford Review of Education, Vol 2, No.3, 1976, p.256.
 - (4) There are only brief references to these dissenting schools in the National Society files, PRO ED 16/209 and Meyers Observer.

which he closed to call for a School Board and William Gundry, resident at South Lodge, supported a Dame school at Botany Bay for a year before closing the premises and calling for a School Board. That all of these elementary private schools, except the dissenting schools, were condemned by the Education Department as inefficient means that they had little part to play in alleviating the official deficiency. As the population in Enfield grew the private schools did not increase in number to accommodate the growing demand for education. In fact, the number of private schools remained static between 1870-94 E.G. West has argued that Board Schools brought the decline of the private school. There seems evidence in Enfield, without a School Board until 1894, that the private schools were in decline for other reasons.

Although the private schools can account for some of the apparent deficiency in school accommodation, and the Education Department always took this into consideration, they cannot fully account for the lack of school provision in Enfield for working-class children.

The Official School Provision in 1870-72.

Although the Education Department was soon to find deficiency in Enfield, there were many voluntary schools in the area in 1870. Elementary education had developed after the Parliamentary vote of an annual grant in 1833. An examination of the distribution of schools across the parish reveals that the schools were often built at the whim of benefactors rather than in areas of need.

i) School provision in Enfield Town.

The first voluntary school built in Enfield Town was the British School, Chase Side, 1838. The school offered non-sectarian education to non-conformist children across the parish. (1) In 1870, an Infant school

(1) R. Taylor, History of a School, Chase Side (1968).

was added and two years later the whole school became government inspected. The first National school was opened in London Road, Enfield Town, 1840. The school became grossly overcrowded and two extra classrooms were built in 1868. (1) The Holly Bush Church School was established by the Rev. Moore Heath in 1864 as a Dame School and by 1872 the school accommodated 150 boys and girls. There were also two Infant schools catering for 96 Infants which were government inspected until 1872. In 1870 there was a total of 912 elementary school places in Enfield Town. (2)

ii) School provision in Enfield Highway.

The new parish of St. James was created in 1833. At the time of the division between eastern and western Enfield, there were still wealthy families living in the area and much of the land was owned by prosperous market gardeners. (3) A new National school was quickly opened in the Highway, 1834, offering 150 places for girls and 150 places for boys. (4) This new school did not long satisfy the needs of the area and an Infant classroom was added in 1841. A school for Boys and Girls was opened at the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield Lock. The school was entirely financed by the War Department until an application for a government grant in 1855 relieved the Factory of full financial responsibility. (5) An Infant school was added in 1856 and a new Mixed

(1) National Society Record Office. Correspondence files. St. Andrew's School.

(2) These figures are calculated from PRO 16/209, dated 1872.

(3) Memoirs of the Rev. Boulden. Unpublished papers, St. James' Vicarage.

(4) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files, St. James' School.

(5) M. Bowbelski, 'The Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield Lock, 1816-1918,' Edmonton Hundred Historical Society Occasional Paper No. 35, (1977).

school in 1869. (1) There was a total of 803 official elementary school places in the Enfield Highway district.

iii) School provision in Ponders End.

The National school in Ponders End was built in 1838. (2) The school accommodated 80 Infants but an adjacent Girls School was soon built to serve the growing community. Official school accommodation for the district remained at 120 places for Boys and Girls. The first Infant School was not government inspected and therefore not officially recognised.

iv) School provision in the rural areas.

In 1845, Jesus Church, Forty Hill, was established as a separate parish. Donations quickly financed the building of the Bulls Cross National School, which opened four years later. (3) The small school housed 50 girls and 50 boys. By the sixties, there was overcrowding and the building had to be enlarged. In 1868, the local population was 1,200 and there was a deficiency of school places. As soon as the parish of St. John's, Clay Hill, was set up, plans were made to build an Infants and a Girls school. In 1867 the land was ready for building and a year later the school accepted the Terms of Union with the National Society. (4) There were a number of schools on the parish borders that educated Enfield scholars: Trent schools, Potters Bar National School and Chipping Barnet schools. The total official school accommodation in the rural areas was 462.

(1) PRO ED 7/172, Application form to be government inspected.

(2) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files, St. Matthew's School.

(3) ibid., Forty Hill School.

(4) ibid., St. John's School.

The elementary education system in Enfield in 1870.

As the population grew, new parishes were formed within the ancient parish of Enfield. As each new parish was created, so a new National School was built. Ironically, the division of the former parish was to produce new areas with a class imbalance and a lack of benevolent subscribers. Many new schools were starved of financial support from their beginnings. There were however thirteen government inspected schools supplying elementary education and twenty six separate Departments. At the passing of the 1870 Education Act Enfield was able to offer over two thousand school places. The question was whether this number was enough.

The H.M.I. Survey of Enfield in 1872.

In order to assess the educational need of each district in the country, the Education Department sent out Inspectors to investigate every parish. In areas of inadequate provision the Department was empowered to call for a School Board; Enfield was not considered to be so poorly provided.

In August 1872 the Education Department sent a printed statement of the total of Enfield's school accommodation with an estimated deficiency of 519 places. Matthew Arnold had been Inspector for the British Schools prior to the Education Act, whereupon he became a Senior Inspector for the whole district, Arnold drew up the list of Enfield's deficiency.(1) He isolated four areas of concern: 240 school places were needed in Enfield Highway, 56 places at Botany Bay, 100 places at Clay Hill and 23 places at Forty Hill. Arnold was not satisfied with some of the government-inspected schools and stipulated that the following schools

(1) PRO ED 16/209 HN 04172.

were to be made more efficient if they wished to continue as recognised schools. He recommended that St. John's, Clay Hill, must have better apparatus and separate toilets, that Clay Hill Protestant School must have new desks, a certificated teacher and separate toilets and that Forty Hill School should have additional toilets.

Matthew Arnold was a trifle gloomy about the state of education in Enfield. Son of Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby, brother-in-law to W.E.Forster, Arnold was apparently not an ideal Inspector. He was too gifted for the mundane chores of testing children under the terms of the Revised Code; he considered his work a drudgery, though it was conscientiously carried out. Although Arnold became an authority on comparative education, travelling abroad for the Taunton and Newcastle Commissions, his interests lay in middle-class education and not the elementary. (1)

Storer Toms, a former manager of the British Schools, when reminiscing at the opening of the Chase Side Board School in 1901, said of Arnold,

I was a great admirer of Matthew Arnold, I loved his poetry and was a great admirer of his power as a literary critic. At the same time, I always felt that in a day school Matthew Arnold was like a fish out of water; he never seemed to me to be intended for an occupation of that kind.

(2)

In his report of 1872 Arnold concluded,

Enfield proper is more than supplied though the school organisation is not exactly what might be wished. There remains Enfield Highway. There is at present a large deficiency here, but the population is fluctuating, and Mr. Harman is building a large new school. This may reduce the deficiency (500) to about 300, but a deficiency there still will be.

(3)

(1) S.Curtis and M.Boulthwood, A Short History of Educational Ideas (1953), p.449.

(2) Meyers Observer, 19th April 1901.

(3) PRO ED 16/209, 1872.

The Education Department had a standard procedure for calculating the deficiency of school accommodation in any given district; the total population was divided into one sixth. A sixth gave the approximate number of children between the ages of 5 and 13. Horace Mann had used the calculation when working on the 1851 Education Census. After the 1870 Education Act the Education Department continued to use the same technique. Later the Department modified the calculation to one fifth in populous working-class areas. (1) In fact, in 1893, the Education Department was to calculate a fifth of the population firmly to establish a deficiency of school accommodation in Enfield.

Deficiency in 1871 using the Census Enumerator Returns.

The 1871 Census gives the total population of Enfield as 16,054. Using the calculation of a sixth, the estimated number of children who should have been eligible for school was 2,675. Arnold's Return Sheet for the schools of Enfield show 2,643 children in official schools. There appears little deficiency. The Enumerator Schedules of the 1871 Census however reveal more detailed information about the number of children between the ages of 5 and 14. The term "scholar" was recorded against those children reported as attending school, although there is some doubt as to the accuracy of such returns. Census officials were convinced of the under-registration of scholars. (2) The Census showed that 40% of boys between 5-9 were not at school and 45% of the girls. (See Table VIII) Therefore a high number of children did not attend an elementary school. The highest average attendance was in

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- (1) D.Rubinstein, School Attendance in London, 1870-1904 (1969), pp.22-3.
- (2) W.Marsden, 'Census Enumerator Returns: Schooling and Social Areas in the Late Victorian Town: A Case Study of Bootle' New Approaches to the Study of Popular Education, 1851-1902 History of Education Society, Occasional Publication No.4. Spring 1979, pp.16-31.

Enfield Town and considering that Enfield Highway was essentially a working-class district, there was a reasonable standard of attendance too. (See Table IX) Perhaps the high number of engineers who valued an education for their children was a factor in the better attendance in the Highway. The rural areas and Ponders End had the lowest number of scholars. Over half the children in Ponders End did not attend school after the age of ten. Ponders End, with official school accommodation for only 120 children, had 60% of boys between the ages of 5-10 not in school and 67% of the girls. These figures reveal a severe deficiency in the district of Ponders End.

There was certainly better school provision in Enfield Town, as Matthew Arnold had noted. There was a higher school attendance too. Yet the area with the highest school provision in Enfield was the area of the least need. The 1871 Census showed more people living in eastern Enfield than to the west. The working-class areas of Enfield Highway, Ponders End and the agricultural areas of Enfield were poorly supplied with schools and were areas of poor school attendance. The ultimate East versus West conflict over civic amenities was based on the general dissatisfaction with public health, sanitation and school provision in the eastern districts. Even in 1871, there were obvious areas of deprivation. There was a sufficient supply of school places in the western districts and insufficient in the eastern districts. The Enumerator Schedules indicate a large deficiency in Enfield, greater than the deficiency estimated by Matthew Arnold. The discrepancy between the evidence of the Enumerator Schedules and the official estimate of deficiency must be born in mind when assessing later claims of lack of school provision in the years leading up to the establishment of the School Board. Official estimates tended to under-estimate the size of the problem of school accommodation.

TABLE VIII. The percentage of children not in school, 1871.

	5-9 year olds	10-14 year olds
Boys	40	46
Girls	45	43

(1)

TABLE IX. Scholars as a percentage of total numbers in each group.

	0-5		5-10		10-14	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Ponders End	8	12	40	33	29	33
Enfield Highway	14	11	63	57	51	57
The Town	20	19	87	74	78	72
Rural areas	12	3	52	58	60	69
Average % in school	13	11	60	55	54	69

(2)

(1) Census Enumerator Schedules 1871.

(2) ibid.

So, having queried the validity of the official estimate of deficiency in Enfield after the passing of Forster's Education Act, it is now possible to examine the conflicts that raged over the issue of school places, 1870-94. The conflicts polarised into those who supported a proposed School Board and those who supported the Church schools. The conflicts grew as the population grew, for the pressure on school accommodation increased and deficiency, officially hidden in 1872, continued to exist throughout the period.

The supporters of the voluntary system.

Forster's Education Act had been designed to fill the gaps in school accommodation left by the existing voluntary schools and to bring School Boards to areas where there were insufficient schools.

Hodson, the Vicar of Enfield, leader of the Church Party in Enfield, upheld the principle that elementary education should remain in the hands of the voluntary bodies. Hodson became Vicar of Enfield in the year of the Education Act. He was therefore immediately faced with government legislation that violently conflicted with his own personal views. The Education Act, however, had not originally been designed to attack the Church schools, so Hodson was able to work amicably with the Education Department for many years. In fact, every attempt was made by Department Officials to avoid the call for a School Board. (1) The Church schools were all given generous time to remedy deficiency and Enfield was to have the same advantage.

The National schools in Enfield were sustained by Hodson's determination to keep a School Board at bay. It was his energy and drive, which often brought him to the point of exhaustion and illness, that raised vast sums of money to maintain the schools.

(1) PRO ED 16/209. In a letter dated 25th January 1876, Hodson asked the Department to send a notice of deficiency to spur his parishioners to larger contributions. The Department concurred.

Hodson strongly represented the traditional village social structure. He clung to his influence over the Vestry and his reputation among the leading families of Enfield. He was a powerful personality in the parish.

With the onus on the voluntary schools to supply further school accommodation, they came under stress as the population grew. The voluntary schools were run on the support of subscriptions, school fees and government grants. In times of need the Church Party turned to the National Society for financial assistance. Although the grants were small, each application form to the National Society demanded details of the local population and the amount of school accommodation in the district. The correspondence files of the National Society therefore monitor the growth of working-class districts in Enfield. They also monitor the struggle of the clergy to maintain and extend the schools.

Hodson took up the challenge offered by the terms of the Education Act. His strategy was firstly to dispute all the Department's unfavourable calculations. As early as 1872 Hodson informed Matthew Arnold that the Department was over-estimating the number of children in the parish.(1) He argued that in Enfield proper, Clay Hill and Forty Hill there were many families that used private education and were not in need of elementary school facilities. Hodson admitted to a deficiency in Enfield Highway, but said the area was only one and a quarter miles from Enfield Town and "is such as to bring the schools of Enfield quite within the reach of children in those districts." (2) In truth, most parts of Enfield Highway were considerably further from Enfield Town.

(1) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Hodson dated 26th September 1872.

(2) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Hodson dated 26th September 1872.

Hodson was soon arguing that there were less children than the Department projected. (1) The numbers of children at the Highway were in fact diminishing, he maintained, because workers were being laid off at the Royal Small Arms Factory. Hodson claimed that his newly-built school in Lock Lane was empty for lack of children.

In the following year, when the Edmonton Union was served with a Notice for the supply of 100 school places at Enfield Wash and 50 places at Clay Hill, Hodson queried that so many children needed schooling in the Clay Hill area. He personally had made a census and found no deficiency in Clay Hill. (2)

Hodson's second strategy in defending the voluntary schools was to fight for government recognition of unofficial schools in order to increase the official school accommodation. He applied to have the Church School of Industry recognised and was unsuccessful. (3) He informed the Department of the Baptist School at Enfield Highway in the hope that a knowledge of its existence might stay a Notice for a School Board. (4) Hodson was involved in an odd claim of a school. He told the Department that he had built a school at Enfield Highway that was empty of children. When asked to submit architectural plans, the Vicar replied that the architect had gone to South Africa and could not be reached. The Department was very suspicious that a school, built only $2\frac{1}{2}$ years before, was apparently in need of considerable repair. The wooden building was neither located by the Inspector nor recognised by the Department. (5)

(1) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Hodson dated 6th August 1874.

(2) ibid., Letter from Hodson dated 7th June 1875.

(3) ibid., 26th September 1872.

(4) ibid., 6th August 1874.

(5) ibid., 12th April 1876.

Hodson was obviously prepared to use every device to defend the existing voluntary schools and keep a School Board away.

Deficiency in Enfield Town.

The 1871 Census Enumerator Schedules showed the Town as an area with the lowest deficiency. A year later, the Gordon Lane Infant School opened off Baker Street, an extension of St. Andrew's Schools. Two extra classes were added in 1887 and 1888. (1) St. Andrew's National School needed two classrooms in 1868 to satisfy the demand for school places. Edward Ford, in cooperation with Hodson, led the fund-raising campaign. Subscriptions were opened for a new building with Philip Twells M.P., of Chase Side House, giving a substantial sum. A year later the Provisional Committee had few donations to report. Mr. Meyer, the editor of Meyers Observer exhorted his readers to give generously to stave off a School Board.

These extravagant sums of money are raised by means of loans, for which the rates of the parish are mortgaged and principal and interest have to be paid annually in addition to a large outlay for teachers' salaries, not at the rate of £56 p.a. as used to be paid to poor masters, only a few years ago, but at the rate of hundreds within the brief period of 12 months. Girls scarcely out of their teens (pupil teachers) receiving £100 and £150 and upwards as their yearly salary.

(2)

Mr. Meyer was certainly employing all the arguments for economy in elementary education while unfairly inflating the salaries Board School teachers received. The alarming possibility of a heavy Education Rate obviously loosened the purse-strings of the voluntary school supporters for the financial target for a new school was quickly reached. A new Boys school was opened in Cecil Road soon afterwards. The former

(1) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files. Gordon Lane School.

(2) Meyers Observer, 3rd August 1868.

school building became a Girls and Infants Department. When a new Girls school was opened at Sydney Road, 1891, the original school became a Higher Grade school and a kindergarten. (1)

Chase Side was a district with a rapidly growing number of working-class houses. St. Michael's Church was opened in 1878 as a Chapel at ease to St. Andrew's, Enfield Town. A small school opened near to the Church which soon became a Girls and Infants Department when a new Boys school was opened in Brigadier Hill. (2) The Boys school had to be extended soon after opening and Hodson was under great stress to keep apace with the growing needs of the district. "Great efforts are required to keep out a School Board by supplying year by year additional accommodation." (3) Two extra classrooms were added to the Girls school, by the Church, in 1892.

All through the period 1870-94, the British Schools, Chase Side, supplied school places not only for the surrounding district but for Nonconformist pupils across the parish. (4) Once the British Society had decided they wished to hand the schools over to a School Board, very little money was spent on extensions or improvements. By the time a School Board was set up, the premises were in an appalling condition. Hodson was constantly haunted by deficiency of school accommodation in Enfield Town in his correspondence to the National Society. Despite his fears, donations and subscriptions were received to maintain the existing schools and build new extensions.

(1) N.S.R.O. Correspondence Files. St. Andrew's Schools.

(2) ibid., St. Michael's Schools.

(3) ibid., Letter from Hodson dated 1st May 1887.

(4) Chase Side School Registers. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

Deficiency in Enfield Highway

From the first the Education Department recognised a deficiency in the Highway. As soon as the Education Act was passed, the Rev. Harman, the wealthy vicar of St. James, built a new school for 150 boys adjacent to the Church. The original school building became the Girls and Infant Department.

Between 1871-91, there were approximately 2,233 working-class houses built in eastern Enfield and the National schools had difficulty in keeping pace with demand. (1)

Two classrooms were added to the Boys school and an extra classroom to the Girls school. Contrary to the prediction of the Rev. Hodson, when he wrote to the Education Department that the Royal Small Arms Factory had just introduced French machinery which would reduce the number of hands, the work force at the R.S.A.F. expanded. So demand for school places increased.

Fund-raising was the greatest difficulty, for nearly all the middle-class families had left the area and the Rev. Davies, unlike the Rev. Harman, was not a man of great private means. The St. James' School Management Committee frequently ran out of money. The Rev. Davies, in despair, offered the schools to a possible School Board, but was briskly admonished by Hodson (warned of events in a letter from the National Society) who set about raising the money to pay the school debts. (2)

The Government Lock School also expanded; a separate Infants School

(1) The figures of the number of houses were taken from the Census Reports of 1871, 81 and 91.

(2) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files. St. James' Schools.

was built near the Lock gates in 1872. The Lock Schools no longer catered only for the children of the factory workers, although the building programme was still financed by the War Department. The Schools grew from accommodating 310 pupils in 1873 to 651 pupils when the Schools came under the control of the Enfield School Board. (1)

St. George's Infant School, Ordnance Road, was opened in 1874 to educate 52 children. An extra classroom was built in 1890 and a further extension in 1893, adding places for 69 pupils more.

There was less school building in Enfield Highway because of the difficulty of raising the necessary large funds. The continued deficiency in the Highway was a factor in the growing alienation of eastern Enfield from the seat of local government in Enfield Town.

Deficiency in Ponders End

In 1871, Ponders End had a large deficiency of school accommodation. School provision was grossly inadequate. When the part-time school opened at the London Jute Works sixty more elementary schools places was available. (2) When this school, the Ponders End Mixed School, was closed at the same time as the Rev. Cotton closed his dissenting school, 1882, Hodson had to act rapidly to stave off a School Board. He hired a hall temporarily and raised the money to build a new school. When a second dissenting school closed in 1886 a further classroom was added to accommodate the official deficiency. (3) The opening of a Roman Catholic school, St. Mary's, in Alma Road helped to alleviate

(1) PRO ED 16/209 Information about the number of pupils came from the Sandford Notice of 1872 and the Lock Government School Log books. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Public Libraries.

(2) The part-time school was opened in 1872 by the Rev. Fotheringham later to be Chairman of the Tottenham School Board.

(3) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files of St. Matthew's Schools 1886.

the pressure for school places. (1) Cardinal Manning had been personally involved in raising money for this little school. In 1891, however, it was incumbent on St. Matthew's Infant School to add yet a further classroom.

Bush Hill Park, the new area of development, was within the ward boundaries of Ponders End. A National school was built near to the site of St. Mark's Church, Main Avenue. (2) Within eight years an extra classroom was needed. This school was the only elementary school in the district. There was a severe deficiency of school places which meant that children either attended St. Andrew's, Enfield Town or St. Matthew's, Ponders End.

Bush Hill Park grew rapidly, outpacing the supply of street lighting, road surfaces and sewers. In 1893 Hodson applied to build a new school for 150 more pupils while a temporary building was already being used to house the Infants and the children of Standards I and II. (3)

Although Hodson extended the Boys Department at St. James' to accommodate the boys of Ponders End, and although he managed to raise large sums of money to build both in Ponders End and Bush Hill Park, there was still a deficiency.

Deficiency in the rural areas.

The parishes of St. John's (Clay Hill) Jesus Church (Forty Hill) and Trent, Christ Church (Cockfosters) all served rural areas. The Rev. Kempe recorded in the parish magazine that his parishioners included

(1) PRO ED 7/88. 1886.

(2) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files. Bush Hill Park Schools. 1882.

(3) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files. Bush Hill Park Schools. 1893.

a handful of influential families and a majority of agricultural workers (1) Hodson neatly described the area to the Education Department as having an "unusual proportion of Upper Middle Class residents who would not avail themselves of the elementary school." (2) As the Lancaster Road housing development encroached into the Clay Hill area, wealthy supporters of the voluntary schools moved away and school subscriptions fell. (3)

St. John's School was extended in 1876 to accommodate children from the school closed by Bosanquet. By 1888, the building was in such disrepair it was condemned by the H.M.I. A new school had to be built for 100 pupils. (4)

Forty Hill School did not come under stress until the death of James Meyer led to the closing of his private school. (5)

St. Luke's Infant School was opened in 1893, the building mainly financed by the Rev. Macy who had enough private income to build his Church as well. It was a small school in a highly populated area. (6)

Botany Bay had a Dame school throughout the period, 1870-92, when William Gundry, a Radical Liberal leader in Enfield, took over the financing of the school. After one year, Gundry closed the school and called for a School Board.

(1) Jesus Church Parish Reports. Care of Jesus Church, Forty Hill.

(2) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Hodson, dated 26th September 1872.

(3) Jesus Church Parish Reports.

(4) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files. St. John's School.

(5) ibid., Forty Hill School (The school still exists as a private residence to the west of Maiden's Bridge).

(6) ibid., St. Luke's School.

The rural areas were not increasing in population as were the urban areas. It was therefore easier for the Church schools to keep apace. The 1871 Census Enumerator Schedules revealed that many children of agricultural workers were not in school.

The Response of the Ratepayers to Deficiency.

Despite the rapidly accelerating population the supporters of the voluntary schools recognised a state of deficiency of school accommodation and gave money to increase the supply of school places. A network of Church schools was built up across the former parish. Many of the subscribers to these voluntary schools believed that donations were more economical than having to pay an Education Rate. There were therefore many ratepayers, both Anglican and Nonconformist, both Conservative and Liberal, who supported the voluntary schools for the sake of economy. That the Church schools continued successfully for twenty four years after the 1870 Education Act indicates a volume of opinion resisting a School Board in Enfield.

Even as early as 1871 the rate of population growth in Enfield showed a commensurately greater number of young children than the rest of the age groups. Each consecutive Census revealed a "school cohort" growing disproportionately to the rest of the increasing population.(1) Such was the consequence of the "dynamic" communities of Bush Hill Park and eastern Enfield. A deficiency was therefore inherent in the process of urbanisation. However, there were individuals who opposed the work of Hodson as inadequate and campaigned for the introduction of a School Board, basing their arguments on the alarming deficiency they saw in the working-class areas.

(1) See Appendix III.

The Conflict Created by the growing interference
of central government.

In 1876 the Local Government Board sent a letter to the Edmonton Union calling for the setting up of a School Attendance Committee. (1) At first the members of the Enfield Board of Health to whom the letter was eventually passed declined to act. Gradually, over a period of a few weeks, the Board realised they were being asked to comply with the law. Reluctantly a School Attendance Committee was formed of all the members of the Board and a Mr. Fawcett was appointed as School Attendance Officer. (2)

The question of school attendance was closely related to the issue of deficiency. Whatever the intention behind the parliamentary legislation to improve school attendance, the attitude of the local administration was crucial. (3) There were strong feelings against compulsion; both by parents who felt it was a restriction of their parental rights and those individuals who employed child labour. The degree of vigilance over school attendance depended on the attitude of the local Board of Health, the byelaws enacted and the attitude of the School Attendance Officer.

The Enfield School Attendance Committee passed no byelaw until compelled by Mundella's Act of 1880 to make it compulsory for children between the ages of five and thirteen to go to a certified efficient school. (4) The immediate effect of this new byelaw was for Mr. Fawcett to list his many duties in a long letter and demand an increase in

(1) Board of Health Minutes, 29th December 1876. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

(2) Board of Health Minutes, 18th May 1877.

(3) A. Ellis, 'Influences on school attendance in Victorian England,' British Journal of Educational Studies Vol XXI, 1973, pp. 313-327.

(4) PRO ED 18/169. Notice from the Court of Windsor, dated 26th February 1880.

wages. He gained a rise of £20 a year. (1)

Accepting a low attendance rate was a very practical way the Church schools could keep apace with population growth; it meant that the number of children on the books could be much higher than the number of school places. (2) In fact, the argument among the supporters of the Church schools was that there was little need for more schools as attendance was so low. The issue of school attendance therefore masked the nature of deficiency in Enfield, 1870-94.

The gradual extension of the powers of the Education Department over the administration of the sanitary districts was resisted and the full implementation of parliamentary legislation restricted. There was therefore conflict between those who sought the implementation of parliamentary legislation at a local level and those who did not.

E.G. West has put the view that it was inevitable that the Education Department would challenge the voluntary societies and the private schools because the Department was unchecked by direct Parliamentary authority. (3) It was certainly inevitable that the Department wanted government money well spent and under a system of controls.

The growing power of the Department put the Church schools under pressure. The 1871 Code immediately increased awards and allowed more subjects to be studied. Sandon's Code of 1875 offered an even wider curriculum. Mundella offered new grants for music and good Infant teaching (1880) empowering a H.M.I. to give a school a merit grant in addition. The Rev. Kempe was very happy to report in the parish

(1) Board of Health Minutes, 24th February 1882.

(2) The Rev. Kempe told the National Society that attendance figures of the Forty Hill School in 1892 were Infants: Boys 29% Girls 24%; Senior Department: Boys 57% Girls 46%.

(3) E. West, Education and the Industrial Revolution (1975) p.183.

magazine that the Forty Hill School had earnt such a merit. (1)

Mundella also set up a Code Committee to draw up a New Code, inviting members of School Boards to submit suggestions. (2) All these measures and the active encouragement of School Board education were interpreted as a threat by the Church School managers on a limited budget. Following the implementation of Mundella's Code, the Rev. Kempe recorded that many Church schools were embarrassed by the New Code but that he was thankful that no schools in Enfield needed to adapt. (3)

The question of free education was controversial too. The Church schools relied heavily on the income from fees and could not compete with the Board schools on rate aid. The issue of free education was being discussed at a national level for some time before the Conservative Party actually passed legislation. The moderate Free Education Act was quickly introduced by the Conservatives at the end of their term of office so that a more extreme piece of legislation would not be passed if the Liberal Party came to power. The Act was vaguely worded, difficult to interpret and of little assistance to the Church schools. (4) Free education was a great strain on the resources of a school, as the faithful Rev. Kempe recorded. (5) St. Andrew's Boys School had charged fourpence a week as fees but from 31st August 1891

(1) Jesus Church Parish Reports.

(2) W.Armytage, A.J.Mundella, 1825-97: The Liberal Background to the Labour Movement (1951) p.210.

(3) Jesus Church Parish Reports.

(4) G.Sutherland, Policy Making in Elementary Education, 1870-95 (1973) p.283.

(5) Jesus Church Parish Reports.

the fees were reduced to one penny a week. (1) The editor of Meyers Observer, ever ready to support the voluntary system, felt that the Free Education Act was a deliberate attempt to lay low the Anglican clergy. In the same year as the Free Education Act, Kekewich introduced a new Code; variable grants were retained for class and specific subjects such as needlework and singing. Attendance grants and standard grants were replaced by a "principal" grant of 12 or 14 shillings per child. (2) The Code also increased the minimum requirements in staffing. There were stiffer regulations about the size of desks and better school buildings. (3) The response of Rev. Kempe was immediate.

Our National Schools have done excellent work in the past year. But the Education Department, under the present administration, is requiring in elementary schools what would be considered superfluities in our great Public schools. We are called upon to make alterations and additions which will involve a large outlay.

(4)

The National Society correspondence files recorded a considerable number of applications from the Enfield Church Schools for financial assistance for items such as new cloakrooms, new drainage, the building of extra rooms and better ventilation. (5)

In January 1893, Acland, the Liberal Vice President, issued Circular

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- (1) St. Andrew's Boys School Log Book. In the hands of St. Andrew's present Headmaster.
 - (2) A. Bishop, The Rise of a Central Authority for English Education (1971), p.121.
 - (3) Parliamentary Papers, 1890-91. LXI.
 - (4) Jesus Church Parish Reports.
 - (5) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files.

No.321 which instructed Inspectors to report all defects of the elementary school buildings, including the lack of school playgrounds. The Archbishop Committee was immediately formed to protest against such extreme measures. (1) By 1894, the Church School Managers in Enfield were in desperate financial straits. Not only did the Managers fear the impending competition of a School Board but they feared for the very survival of their schools.

Much of the correspondence of the clergy to the National Society and statements made from the pulpit recorded in Meyers Observer reflect a resentment of what was considered government interference. It followed a long tradition of a belief in local autonomy and that belief played its part in the local conflicts about the supply of school accommodation and the financing of elementary schools.

The role of the Nonconformists over the issue of school accommodation.

Many Nonconformists in Enfield were also active members of the Liberal Party. The discontent of having to send their children to the Anglican schools took the form of political expression. However, some Nonconformists, such as Ebenezer Gibbon, owning many properties in Enfield, supported the voluntary schools for fear of an Education Rate.

Quite soon after the Education Act, the committee of the British Schools stated they would favour handing over to a School Board. Gradually subscriptions dropped as the British and Foreign Society made the decision to transfer financial support from the elementary schools to the Training Colleges. In 1876 the managers of the British

(1) J.Fairhurst, 'Some Aspects of the Relationship between Education, Politics and Religion,' D.Phil., Oxford, 1974.

Schools in Enfield sold their assets in order to continue financing the schools in Chase Side. The buildings were in such disrepair as to be the butt of criticism from the supporters of the Anglican schools. As most of the pupils were Nonconformists who would not wish to attend the Church schools, despite financial difficulties, the schools were kept open and managed to continue until the calling of a School Board.

The British Schools were not the only schools offering an alternative to the Church schools for there is much evidence to show that dissenting schools existed all through the parish. Their existence would suggest that a number of parents rejected Anglican religious teaching and supported a more liberal curriculum. The dissenting schools were all in close proximity to the National schools and were therefore in direct competition and they had a strong tradition of teaching a wider range of subjects than the normal elementary schools.

The National Society correspondence files revealed the existence of a number of dissenting schools in the reports of the Enfield clergy. The Jute Factory part-time school, officially known as the Ponders End Mixed School, was financed by the London Jute Company but run by the Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Fotheringham, with a Presbyterian teacher. (1) The school closed after ten years when the Jute Works closed. A dissenting school, run by the Baptists, had opened in Ponders End in 1878 and continued for four years. A further dissenting school ran for eight months and was then closed down. A Baptist school was opened in Totteridge Road, Enfield Highway, in 1874. It

(1) PRO ED 7/88.

is not known how long the school survived but the school premises were later used as temporary schools by the Enfield School Board. In Enfield Town, the Gordon Lane school was extended in 1887 to accommodate the children of a closing dissenter school.

There may well have been other such schools, unrecorded, that offered education to the children of the working classes. Perhaps these schools bridged the gaps of deficiency. The Nonconformists had achieved social and religious freedoms through their support of the Liberal Party; so the Nonconformists in Enfield turned to the Liberal Party to bring about a School Board.

The Liberal Party's Strategy in calling a School Board.

The Liberal Party, with so many Nonconformist members, was a powerful pressure group in favour of a School Board in Enfield. There is considerable evidence to show that the Liberal Party organised a campaign to press the Education Department directly over the question of deficiency. The application to the Education Department indicated the Liberals' lack of local influence, their belief in State intervention in the administration of the 1870 Education Act and their concern that local government was hampering the full effectiveness of such national legislation. The historian of the National Education League, F.Adams, put the Liberal view succinctly. "The most flattering, exaggerated and fallacious estimates of existing accommodation were prepared for the Department. The Church hunted for money, propaganda was spread about how expensive the School Board would be." (1)

The success of a direct appeal to the Education Department depended on the political climate of the day; ultimately the campaign was

(1) F.Adams, The History of the Elementary School Contest in England (1882), p.241.

successful with a sympathetic Secretary, Kekewich, and a sympathetic Vice-President, Acland.

Resistance began soon after the Education Act. In Matthew Arnold's report of 1872 criticism was made of a small Protestant school run by J.W.Bosanquet at Clay Hill. Bosanquet was an elderly man, a retired banker, who had earned a reputation as a writer on Biblical and Assyrian chronology. (1) Certainly an eccentric, Bosanquet was an Anglican and a Liberal supporter. There was considerable animosity between Bosanquet and the Rev. Hodson over theological matters that overspilled into the area of elementary education. Eventually Bosanquet deliberately closed the school and wrote to the Department to demand a School Board. (2) It meant that Hodson had to build another classroom at St. John's but a School Board was averted. Storer Toms, the Liberal pastor of Christ Church, Chase Side, called a meeting about deficiency in 1878. With the new National school being built in the Town Hodson was able to persuade the Department there were no lack of places. (3)

The next crisis occurred in Ponders End when the Rev. Cotton, a Liberal supporter, closed his small school in New Road. Simultaneously, the Rev. Fotheringham, an active Liberal in Tottenham, closed down the Jute Factory part-time school in South Street. (4) Cotton wrote

(1) C.Whitaker, An Illustrated Historical, Statistical and Topographical Account of the Urban District of Enfield. (1911), pp.303-4.

(2) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Bosanquet dated 18th December 1875.

(3) Meyers Observer, 17th August 1878.

(4) PRO ED 16/209. Interview Memorandum with Rev.A.T.Cotton. Dated 16th February 1882.

to the Department calling for a School Board. Again Hodson was able to rally enough money to supply the necessary school accommodation. The 1891 Education Act, allowing some free places in elementary schools, galvanised the Liberals into action. The following year the National Education Association was set up to call for more free places. The Association issued forms to be sent to the Department if there were insufficient free school places in any given parish. (1) In response to this national movement the Enfield Free and Popular Education League was launched. George Spicer, a prominent local Liberal, was Chairman and W.S.Richards, a working man and a trade union official in the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, was the Honorary Secretary. Prebendary Hodson was not prepared to offer more than a few free places in Enfield. Even as late as November 1893 Hodson told the Department that if he gave free places to all those who asked he would lose income from fees. He would not offer any more free places. (2)

W.S.Richards, a Liberal, was the first parent to write complaining to the Department that his children were still having to pay fees. The Department brusquely informed him that he did not have the right to a free place. (3) Richards wrote three times, in his capacity as the Hon. Secretary of the Enfield Free and Popular Education League, to

(1) G.Sutherland, Policy Making in Elementary Education, 1870-95' (1975), p.283.

(2) Enfield School Attendance Committee Minutes. 1892-93. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

(3) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Richards dated 3rd September 1891.

complain of deficiency in Enfield. The notes, written by Department officials on the back of his letters, advised that Richards should be rebuffed. (1)

Meanwhile the Liberal Party called a large Public meeting to discuss the problem of school accommodation. Kitching, President of the Liberal Association, and W.O.Clough M.P. called for a School Board. A memorial was sent to the Education Department about the deficiency in Enfield. (2)

The civil servants in the Education Department had prevaricated over the problems in Enfield but were forced into action when the Vice-President was questioned in the House of Commons on the subject.

Mr. CHANNING. (Northampton E.) I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the number of existing school places in the parish of Enfield is now 4,371; and whether, in view of the facts that last year's Census showed a population in the parish of 31,332, and that on the Departmental basis of one-sixth of the population the number of school places required would be 5,255, he will state what steps the Department has taken, or proposes to take, to secure that this deficiency of 884 places be supplied without delay. (3)

Francis Channing had also put a question on paper.

To ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council whether he is aware that the population of the district of Bush Hill Park, in the parish of Enfield, is now about 3,600; that in this district there is only one small Infant School; that the London Road Schools, the nearest school for older scholars, is a mile and a quarter distant from Bush Hill Park; and that many of the children from Bush Hill Park have to cross a Level Crossing on the Great Eastern Railway in order to reach it; and whether he will take immediate steps to have suitable school provision made for this district. (4)

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- (1) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Richards dated 14th November 1892.
- (2) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Kitching dated 8th December 1891.
- (3) Parliamentary Debates 4th Series, Vol.I Col.1492, 29th February, 1892.
- (4) ibid.

The Vice-President (Mr.W.Hart Dyke, Kent, Dartford) replied:

When the results of the Census was known, the Department became aware of a deficiency, though not the extent assumed in the question. but no pressure upon the existing supply was experienced until the Free Education Act came into operation. Since the calculation of the number of school places given by the hon. member enlargements providing for more than 150 children have been sanctioned, and others are in preparation. A site for a new school in Bush Hill Park district has been approved, and the plans will be submitted in the course of a few days. It is confidently expected that by the end of the summer the whole ground will be covered, and the Inspector reports that even now there is no difficulty in finding room for all the older children who are under the obligation to attend school.

(1)

George Spicer was to speak of Carvell-Williams M.P. later as the man who had done the most to bring about a School Board. As Carvell-Williams was Secretary to the Liberation Society, membership of the Society may well have been the link between the Liberal supporters of Enfield and Francis Allston Channing. Channing was a Liberal Member of Parliament for Northamptonshire East, 1885-1910. Throughout his parliamentary career, he was active in "promoting agricultural, educational and labour reforms." (2) Channing was an ardent supporter of School Boards, he himself had served on the School Board of Hove before entering Parliament. (3) He was an obvious Parliamentarian to approach on the matter of Enfield's deficiency.

The final crisis came in September 1892. It was a crisis that could not be resolved by the formidable fund-raising capacity of the Vicar

(1) Parliamentary Debates 4th Series, Vol.I Col. 1493, 29th February, 1892.

(2) The Times, Obituary Notice, 20th February 1926.

(3) F.Channing, Memoirs of Midland Politics (1918).

of Enfield. The War Department wrote to inform the Education Department that it was future policy to close all government factory schools. Enfield had two years to make alternative arrangements. (1) There were over six hundred children being educated at the Lock Government School, so Hodson would have to build a large school in Enfield Highway to keep away a School Board. The existing schools in eastern Enfield could scarcely raise sufficient funds. It was an impossible task.

In November Richards wrote yet again to the Education Department calling for a public enquiry. He challenged the Department's figures and insisted there was a large deficit in Enfield. Furthermore, he explained, the Managers of the British Schools would like to hand over to a Board. Richards was expressing the local Liberal view that the leading local hierarchy was delaying the implementation of government legislation and denying the working classes an elementary education.

We consider we are not in a position to put the matter to the vote of the parishioners as we are in a locality composed of a great number opposed to a School Board, and therefore think we have all the more cause to rely upon your Department to force upon the Parish that which the Law demands and which you have in your power to investigate so that you may prove my figures, which I am sure are correct, reveals a disgraceful state of things for a parish like Enfield.

(2)

Richards also mentioned that he had sent a duplicate letter to the Prime Minister, Mr. Gladstone. For the first time the Education Department took Richards seriously, having snubbed previous letters. The civil servants were not taking the regular questions about Enfield's deficiency in the House of Commons lightly either. When

(1) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Sir Arthur Haliburton dated 23rd September 1892.

(2) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Richards dated 14th November 1892.

Channing raised the matter of school accommodation in Enfield, he talked in terms of official numbers. He had calculated that a sixth of the population amounted to 5,255 school children, and yet the Church schools could only accommodate 4,371. In fact the figures given to Channing by the local Liberal Party underestimated the amount of school provision needed by four hundred places. A calculation of a fifth could change the deficiency at once. The Education Department continued to discuss the problem; Danby, the H.M.I., was sure the voluntary schools could cope with demand, but Acland, who became Vice-President in August 1892, had instructed that all queries were to be taken seriously and every check made. (1)

The Department contacted Somerset House for the 1891 Census figures for Enfield. The Clerk to the Enfield Board of Health, Letchworth, was asked to supply a map of the area, with schools marked in red and residential areas in green. The Department estimated that the current population was 34,000. (2)

By calculating a sixth of the population, the total of school children should have been 5,666. However at this stage, despite the plea of the Enfield Board of Health that many ^{middle-class} children did not require elementary education, the Department decided to calculate one fifth of the population. The change in the method of calculating deficiency obviously officially increased the estimated number of children needing schooling. The Department had decided that the large working-class districts warranted consideration. A calculation of a fifth increased the estimated school provision to 6,800 places. At a stroke of a pen, the official deficiency was greatly increased.

(1) G. Sutherland, Policy Making in Elementary Education, 1870-95 (1975), p.343.

(2) PRO ED 16/209. Undated notes.

Letchworth was asked to send the School Returns to the Department. The list he sent was bizarre, for the accommodation of each Church school was grossly inflated and unofficial schools were included. The Enfield Board of Health presented an optimistic view of the school accommodation available. (1)

While the Department investigated the deficiency, there followed a number of letters of complaint by parents in Enfield. All of these correspondents can be identified as working-class Liberals. Mr. Hoare of Fourth Avenue, Bush Hill Park, complained that his child could not be accommodated in a school. (2) H.Martin, an engineer at the R.S.A.F., wrote to complain of insufficient free school places. (3) W.P.Moses, Secretary of the Ponders End Liberal Club wanted the removal of fees.

I beg to inform you, that it seems to me, that, as far as this part of the District of Enfield is concerned it would have been quite as well if no free Education Act was in existence. I send six children to school out of which I am called on to pay one penny a week for four.

(4)

Three other parents, un-named, had also written to protest about the lack of free school places in Enfield. In July, Alfred Kitching wrote to the Department in his capacity as Justice of the Peace. He asked how a magistrate can fine a parent for non-attendance when there were insufficient school places in the area. So the members of the Liberal

(1) PRO ED 16/209. Letter from Letchworth 6th January 1893.

(2) ibid., Hoare was named on the Willesden precedent issued to Enfield as one of the four parents who wanted free education. Undated.

(3) ibid., Letter from Herbert Martin dated 1st August 1893.

(4) ibid. Letter from W.P.Moses dated 30th November 1893.

Party did not lessen their pressure on the Department as the fate of a School Board in Enfield lay in the balance.

Mr. Field, the new H.M.I. for Enfield, was sent to make a full report on the parish. The Vice-President was still under pressure in Parliament on the need for a School Board in Enfield and he was therefore anxious to have the matter settled.

The Department turned its attention to the existing Church schools. By calculating the square footage of each school, it was found they were grossly overcrowded. (1) The Department also continued the issue of free education; a letter was sent to the School Attendance Committee asking which schools offered free places and where such vacancies were in the parish. At this point Hodson refused to allow any more free places. (2) In July 1893 Enfield were therefore served with a Notice of deficiency of 519 school places.

August was an exciting month for Enfield. While Hodson wrote to protest against the Department's calculations, a large Public meeting was called by the supporters of the Church schools. (3) The meeting however was packed with Liberal supporters, with six well-known School Board supporters managing to speak. In a tumultuous uproar the motion of support for the voluntary schools was roundly defeated.

While pressure continued on the Vice-President and the War Office wrote to confirm the closure of the Lock Government Schools, the editor of Meyers Observer appealed to readers to give generously to the Church cause. He even argued that there was little need to build when the

(1) PRO ED 16/209. Dated 20th June 1893.

(2) ibid., Letter from Hodson dated 4th October 1893.

(3) Meyers Observer, 12th August 1893.

schools were half empty through absenteeism and many middle-class children attended private schools. "But it is now very well known that the only power to avert a School Board is the power of the purse." (1)

The Liberals in Enfield had made contact with Francis Channing M.P., who had taken up Enfield's educational cause in Parliament. It was this action that brought pressure to bear on the Department to investigate the school accommodation of Enfield. The Liberals had therefore won their campaign for State education in the parish. The Finals Notice was served on Enfield on 8th December 1893. A School Board would be set up. (2)

The Nonconformist Triumph.

The local community had successfully kept the Education Department at bay and a deficiency hidden for twenty four years. Local personalities had been able to check the influence of parliamentary legislation until the appointment of Acland gave parishioners the right to query the supply of school accommodation and be heard.

The supporters of the Church schools had supplied an impressive amount of school accommodation and had kept pace with demographic growth. The deficiency cited by the Department meant that only 17% of children of school age were not in school. There had been school provision for 2,048 children in December 1871 and this accommodation had been increased by 2,323 places in the twenty four years, which was an increase of 113%. The rate of supply of school places can be placed against the percentage increase in population in the same period which was 105%.

(1) Meyers Observer, 25th August 1893.

(2) ibid., 8th December 1893.

It should be remembered however that the percentage of children of school age was disproportionately higher than other age groups in the population, a symptom of a dynamic urban community. Nonetheless the personal achievement of the Rev. Hodson was impressive. The extent of his achievement may explain the reluctance of the Education Department, prior to the era of Acland, to interfere where a local community was providing an adequate rate of new school accommodation.

Despite such difficulties, a determined group of Nonconformists had campaigned for a system of education that offered alternative elementary education to that of the voluntary system. Most of the campaigners were middle-class men who had little interest in elementary schools for the education of their own children. They were driven by the belief that education should not be in the sole hands of the Church and that there was a link of great significance between the development of education and the development of democracy.

CHAPTER FOUR.

THE CONFLICTS INVOLVED IN THE
SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION OF 1894.

The School Board election brought into full public view the conflicts that had beleaguered the issue of elementary school provision in Enfield for twenty four years. It also revealed the complexity of conflicts; it was not simply a conflict between Nonconformists and Anglicans. There were Anglicans who supported the Board schools and Nonconformists who supported the Church schools. There were Liberals who believed in secular education and Liberals who believed in religious instruction. There were rich and poor ratepayers who equally feared a high Education Rate. There were men who valued the importance of elementary education and men who considered it expedient to administer the 1870 Education Act as inexpensively as possible. All these view points were recorded in the reporting of public meetings and in the letter columns of Meyers Observer. (1)

The great issue in the election was the religious instruction to be taught in the future Board schools; an issue not unrelated to the current events on the London School Board. (2) When Athlestan Riley asked the teachers employed by the London School Board to teach Christian dogma, over three thousand teachers had refused. The heightened conflict between Nonconformists and Anglicans on the London School Board certainly influenced events in Enfield. Prebendary Hodson was quick to defend his own position on religious instruction.

(1) The newspaper was a conservative publication with a quite open support for the voluntary school system. The Editor, however, recorded the election campaign in conscientious detail.

(2) J.Munson, 'The London School Board Election of 1894', British Journal of Educational Studies, Vol.XXIII, 1975, pp.7-24.

I find that some of Nonconformist opponents are endeavouring to raise a prejudice against Churchmen as members of the School Board by accusing them of an intention, if elected, of violating the principles of the Education Act, and endeavouring to force distinctive Church teaching on the children in Board schools. Nothing can be further from the truth.

(1)

A letter published from William Richards, Honorary Secretary of the Enfield Free and Popular Education League, demonstrated Nonconformist suspicions.

For twenty one years the religious settlement has worked well in London. If the Ratepayers of Enfield wish their Board to be turned into a cockpit for theological controversy and their schools to be nurseries of extreme views, they will place Mr. Hodson and his party in the majority. Mr. Hodson's allusions to the theory that the Board schools were meant to supplement and not supplant voluntary schools, suggest that in his view the first duty of the School Board is to secure efficient education for the children without regard to vested interest of any kind.

(2)

The Church Party.

The Church Party, led by the Vicar of Enfield, suggested an uncontested election as soon as campaigning began. It was not an unusual step to suggest, for many elections were uncontested to save expense. (3) The Church Party made the assumption that they would thus secure five of the nine seats on the prospective Board. It was not a suggestion welcomed by the supporters of the School Board.

(1) Meyers Observer, 19th January 1894.

(2) ibid., 26th January 1894.

(3) R.Kelsey, 'English Public Elementary Education, 1862-1902, with special reference to Blackburn, Lancs.' M.A. London, 1972.

The Church Party was quick to act. An advertisement was placed in the local newspaper on behalf of the six Church candidates; the Rev. Hodson, the Rev. Kempe, the Rev. Davies, W.J.Mitchell, A.Matthews and J. Rigby. (1) The increase to six candidates, from the five anticipated in an uncontested election, was perhaps a political move to offer a candidate from every district of the parish. Three of the candidates were clergymen; Hodson was Vicar of Enfield and Chairman of the Enfield Church Schools Management Committee, Kempe was a close personal friend of Hodson (2) and Vicar at Jesus Church, Forty Hill, and Davies was the Vicar of St. James, Enfield Highway, a quiet scholarly man who was frequently overwhelmed by the financial difficulties of the St. James' National schools. (3) The three laymen were W.J.Mitchell, churchwarden of St. Andrew's and a market gardener in Ponders End, A.Matthews, churchwarden at St. Matthew's, Ponders End, and a member of the Enfield Board of Health and J.Rigby, Superintendent at the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield Lock.

The Church Party's election campaign emphasised the role of the Church had played in supplying elementary education in the past, reassuring the ratepayers that they "would oppose all extravagant expenditure and unnecessary building and any attempt to injure the existing schools." (4) They also pledged non-denominational religious instruction in all the Board schools to be built. The three members of the clergy and the three laymen were all men who had played a strongly

(1) Meyers Observer, 2nd February 1894.

(2) Personal reminiscences of the late daughter of the Rev.Kempe, Mrs. Ford.

(3) Meyers Observer, 2nd February 1894.

(4) ibid.

supportive role in the administration of the Church schools. Meyer, the editor of Meyers Observer, was quick to point out the weight of experience of the Church candidates. "They can take to the new Board a thoroughly practical and ripe experience; and if they are elected the parish will have all the advantage of that experience."(1)

The campaigning continued between the two main opposing groups. At public meetings, the candidate's speeches smacked of personal and vindictive abuse. Hodson led the attack on the Unsectarians, as the Nonconformists were known. "Out of about 5,700 children only some 300-350 were attending the unsectarian school, the rest being left to be educated by Churchmen. If these people were friends of unsectarian education.... I would say.... Save me from my friends." (2)

The Church Party particularly ridiculed E.J.Betts, an Unsectarian candidate, both about his ability and his occupation as an undertaker.

"Unfortunately in some quarters it appears to be thought that the less education a man has, the better is he fitted to manage the education of others." (3) There was little discussion of such issues as the curriculum or educational standards.

The Unsectarians.

The Nonconformists were quick to organise; a meeting of the Friends of Unsectarian Education was held at Chase Side," with a view of agreeing whose names are suitable for nomination as members of the Board which is to be elcted shortly." (4) A further meeting was held to discuss the proposal for an uncontested election. Dr. J.J.Ridge, the Medical

(1) Meyers Observer, 2nd February 1894.

(2) ibid., 23rd February 1894.

(3) ibid., 19th January 1894.

(4) ibid., 26th January 1894.

Officer of Health for Enfield, dominated this rowdy meeting with his opposition to any compromise with the Church Party and "in the course of his remarks levelled charges of insincerity against the Church Party and the Vicar in particular." (1)

Not all Nonconformists however agreed with Dr. Ridge's point of view. A fellow member of Christ Church wrote to Meyers Observer in support of an uncontested election, reflecting that the ratio of five Churchmen to four Nonconformists reflected the Church's predominance in school building. (2)

Once the Unsectarians had rejected the offer of an uncontested election, they turned attention to the selection of candidates. Five were to be chosen to represent both the Nonconformist and Radical Liberal interests. The Unsectarians deliberated over their choice. George Spicer was the first to be named. A director in the family paper business, James Spicer and Sons, (a business that had flourished since the passing of the 1870 Education Act with the increased demand for school stationery) George Spicer was a well known self styled "gentleman" in Enfield. The Spicers' were a leading family in the national Congregational church, and George Spicer was a deacon at Christ Church, Chase Side. (3) Spicer frequently chaired public meetings, he was Treasurer of the Cottage Hospital, Governor of the Enfield Grammar School, supporter of the Y.M.C.A. movement, active in the Temperance movement and a leading member of the Radical Liberal Association in Enfield (4) A gentle and humane man, Spicer was to play a key role in the work of the Enfield

(1) Meyers Observer, 26th January 1894.

(2) ibid., Letter from Frederick Geo. Fitch.

(3) In 1897, Morlais Jones was quoted in the Congregational Yearbook as saying, "you must abolish the unwritten word that the first qualification to be a deacon is that a man should possess a cheque book."

(4) Meyers Observer, 10th March Obituary Notice.

School Board. While Spicer spoke of the need for better educational standards, other Nonconformists were continuing to make personal attacks on the Vicar of Enfield. F.J.Hinton, freshly announced as an Unsectarian candidate, wrote to the local paper in spiteful terms. "Everyone admits that the Vicar has worked nobly and though he has failed to succeed, has done so honorably. But it is open to objection that exclusive control should be placed in the hands of any State-paid Party." (1) Hinton represented the extreme Nonconformist view with his bitter attacks on the Established Church.

If the ratepayers elected a majority of what he might style, without any wish to be offensive, the old gang, those members would be in the position of gentlemen who in order to get rid of bad business which they had on their hands, promoted a company. They would be able to get the School Board to take over their cowsheds and disused chapels and all that kind of stock.

(2)

The names of the Unsectarian candidates were revealed in the February 2nd edition of Meyers Observer; George Spicer, F.J.Hinton, E.J.Betts, W.Cooler and J.W.Delahaye. All the gentlemen were Radical Liberals and all except Delahaye were members of the Congregational Church. Spicer was to be the most eminent, F.J.Hinton was a trustee of the Avenue Hall, Bush Hill Park and a business man in the City. (3) E.J.Betts was an undertaker at Enfield Highway and had recently been elected on to the Board of Guardians. Walter Cooler ran a Grocery store and a Post Office in South Street and was a prominent member of the Ponders End Ratepayers Association. J.W.Delahaye was a printer and a Trades Unionist.

(1) Meyers Observer, 2nd February 1894.

(2) ibid., 9th February 1894.

(3) Minute Book of the Bush Hill Park Congregational Church, 1893. Now in the possession of the Bush Hill Park United Reformed Church, Main Avenue, Enfield.

Delahaye was the only working-class candidate, nominated by another working man, W.S.Richards, Honorary Secretary of the Enfield Free and Popular Education League. Although Delahaye's speeches were briefly recorded, and he was always the last on the platform to speak, he offered a working-class view of elementary education. Delahaye had wanted a School Board for a long time and he believed that School Boards should construct their own buildings. (1) He also repeated the Trades Union slogan that School Board contracts be given only to firms that paid a fair wage. (2) Delahaye wanted the working class educated in good schools and although he was against Church influence in education, he supported non-sectarian religious instruction. Delahaye's nomination showed that the Unsectarians appreciated they were to rely heavily on the working-class vote.

The Unsectarian manifesto promised schools where deficiency demanded, that those schools should be well-equipped and that the education offered should be sound and efficient. The Unsectarians pledged, "To see that the religious education in the schools shall consist of reading the Bible with such verbal explanation as may be suitable to the children in accordance with the compromise so long at work in the London School Board." (3) None of the Progressive Party, or Unsectarians, stood for secular instruction. In fact, the views of the Unsectarians on the issue were not dissimilar to the Church Party.

Both Progressives and Moderates (as the Church Party was also named) held regular public meetings in all districts of the parish. At one

(1) H.Pelling, The History of British Trade Unionism (1963).

(2) B.Simon, Education and the Labour Movement 1870 - 1920 (1974), p.154.

(3) Meyers Observer, 9th February 1894.

meeting, Spicer noted sadly, "I am sorry three Vicars are standing in the Church Party, it makes it look as if the election is over religion. It is not. The issue is education." (1) However two more clergymen were to put their names forward as Independent candidates for the election.

The Independent Candidates.

Ebenezer Gibbon, a leading Baptist in Enfield, put himself forward as an Independent candidate. A man of some substance in the community, he owned considerable property, a confectionery business and a market garden to the east of the Town. He was a member of the Burial Board, Trustee of the Enfield Parochial Charities and had played a part on the Enfield Board of Health and the Board of Guardians.(2)

Gibbon represented the defenders of laissez-faire politics among the community. He was against the growing intervention of the State in local affairs. It was no accident that Gibbon was against the increasing taxation that State administration involved for he was one of the largest ratepayers in the district. He was a supporter of the voluntary schools and stood as a candidate against extravagance. Although a Nonconformist and a Liberal, he was to vote consistently with the Church Party. Gibbon financed some enterprising advertisements in Meyers Observer.

(1) Meyers Observer, 9th February 1894.

(2) ibid., 5th May 1911. Obituary Notice.

VOTE FOR GIBBON

Because he will best secure your true interests
on the Board,
Because he will prevent needless expenditure,
Because he will secure sound education for your children,
Because he will not encourage sectarianism,
Because he is a man of sound judgement,
Because he knows the wants of the parishioners,
Because he doesn't believe in ornamental officials,
Because he will be a worker on the Board,
Because he will advocate employing Enfield builders,
Because he will try to keep the Rates down,
Because he knows working men have no wish to sacrifice
home comforts for heavy rates,
Because he knows taxation is too heavy now, without
increasing it,
Because he is one of the oldest parishioners.

VOTE FOR GIBBON.

(1)

The first clergyman to put his name forward as an Independent candidate was the Rev. Storer Toms, son of Toms, the Partnership of "Derry and Toms" in Knightsbridge. Educated at University College, London, he received a theological training at New College, St. John's Wood. (2) Appointed pastor at the Chase Side Chapel in 1865, he became minister of Christ Church, when the two chapels, standing side by side for eighty years, combined to form one congregation in 1871. (3) Toms was an enthusiastic and popular minister, sealing his reputation by climbing the 150 foot spire of his new Church to fix a weather vane. Toms was an active Liberal all his life, and, as a member of the National Education League, concerned with elementary education. He was Secretary to the British Schools in Chase Side, a member of the Burial Board and a Governor of Enfield Grammar School.

(1) Meyers Observer, 2nd March 1894. Advertisement.

(2) F.Gould and J.Day, Christ Church, Enfield (1975).

(3) G.Knight, 'Nonconformist Churches in Enfield' Edmonton Hundred Historical Society Occasional Paper No.24. (1973), pp.5-6.

Toms' candidature was an immediate embarrassment to the Unsectarian group; for it was quickly realised that the Nonconformist vote could be split, allowing the Church Party an ultimate majority. Indeed the very congregation of Christ Church was split, with loyalty divided between the pastor and the Progressive deacons. (1) There was a split in the Liberal ranks too; for Toms was not a Radical Liberal as were the rest of the Unsectarian candidates. A rift soon developed between Dr. J.J.Ridge and the Rev. Storer Toms. Ridge objected that Storer Toms' candidature jeopardised the Unsectarian group. Albert Kitching, J.P., intervened on behalf of Toms as Chairman of the Enfield Liberal Association. The Enfield Division of the Middlesex (Central) Liberal and Radical Association stood firm behind the Progressive candidates.

However, despite such divisions, the educational ideals of Storer Toms were little different from the Unsectarians. Toms believed that working-class children should be able to climb the ladder from the elementary school to the highest university. In his manifesto, Storer Toms, in accordance with official British Society policy, stated that the British Schools would be handed over to a new Board.

The last candidate to come forward was the Rev. Charles Carter, curate at the Royal Small Arms Factory Chapel. A graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, Carter had come to serve the Enfield Lock community in 1889.

(2) He was a man of culture with a house like a museum in Ordnance Road. He gladly welcomed visitors to see his collection of china,

(1) Christ Church was essentially a middle-class congregation and there were strong class divisions between the leading families and the working-class worshippers. Reminiscences of Mr. Fred Gould.

(2) Crockford's Directory 1918.

paintings and etchings. (1) He also chased away local youngsters who crept up his garden path in an attempt to teach blasphemous language to his parrot. (2)

There was much personal animosity between the Rev. Carter and the Vicar of Enfield; Carter had, of course been appointed to the Chapel at ease to St. James' Enfield Highway not by Hodson but by the War Department. Not only was Carter a High Churchman and Hodson an Evangelical but they held opposing views of the role of the Church in an urbanising society.

It had been a deliberate slight on the part of Hodson to choose Rigby, the Superintendent at the Royal Small Arms Factory, rather than Carter, as the Church Party candidate in Enfield Highway. Such a decision also showed how grossly the Vicar of Enfield over-estimated the popularity of the Superintendent and under-estimated the true mood of the working people. When Carter was eventually elected, receiving over four thousand more votes than Hodson, Hodson asked the Rev. Boulden of St. James' Church to dismiss Carter, thereby reducing the Progressive majority on the Board; the Rev. Boulden however would not comply.(3) By standing as an Independent, and a supporter of non-denominational religious instruction, Carter threatened to divide the Church vote in eastern Enfield. Rigby quickly realised this dilemma, for he knew Carter to be a popular man with the R.S.A.F. workers, so he immediately placed an advertisement in Meyers Observer calling for local support. Counter rumours spread around the Lock that Rigby had put a manifesto in every man's pay packet; this Rigby denied.

(1) Illustrated London News, 24th March 1894.

(2) Personal reminiscences of Mr. Andrews.

(3) Rev. Boulden's Memoirs. Unpublished papers, St.James' Vicarage.

The First Enfield School Board Election.

All that remained was for Enfield to receive notification from the Education Department of the exact date of the School Board election.

It was not until 23rd February that the Returning Officer, Francis Shelton, was able to announce the 10th March as the date of the election. Nominations had to be handed in by 26th February. (1)

At the closing date for nominations, there were fourteen candidates competing for the nine seats on the Enfield School Board. (2) Although only one working-class man stood among the candidates, the focus of much attention was on the potential use of the working-class vote. The election campaign had revealed the conflicts between eastern and western Enfield as never before. The smear campaign against Carter was a last desperate attempt by the Church Party to discredit a popular candidate and secure support in the Highway. Hodson, who did not seem to conceive the working class as a viable political force and secure in his status in western Enfield, misjudged his influence in the eastern districts. The working class in Ponders End and Enfield Highway were well aware that there was insufficient school accommodation in their districts and that the only schools in existence taught Christian dogma.

As the election date neared, Meyers Observer, in the editorials, pressed readers to vote wisely. "Criticism has been levelled at the Clerical Party, but the issue is, how can Enfield possibly not vote for such candidates?" (3)

(1) Meyers Observer, 23rd February 1894.

(2) ibid., 2nd March 1894.

(3) ibid., 9th March 1894.

The problem of cumulative voting did not evade the Church Party. (1)

Hodson published a letter to confirm how supporters should vote.

Will you allow me through your paper earnestly to request those kind friends who have expressed their intention of plumping for me or giving me half their votes, to do nothing of the kind; but to divide their votes among the Church candidates in the way suggested on the cards issued by the central committee. In an election of this kind where there is cumulative voting, it is of utmost importance towards success, not to waste votes. I make this request as a personal favour.

Your obedient servant
George H. Hodson.

(2)

The election took place on Saturday, 10th March. There were four polling stations in the parish; namely, Sydney Road Schools (Enfield Town), Ordnance Road School (Enfield Highway), St. Matthew's Schoolroom (Ponders End) and the Iron Room (Cockfosters). (3) The small number of polling stations meant that many voters either had to travel considerable distances or be discouraged from voting at all. Voting by ballot took place between the hours of 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Each voter had nine votes which could be given all to one candidate or divided as pleased among the candidates. Following the national pattern of a low poll in School Board elections, only 53% of the population voted. The busiest polling station was at Enfield Highway where people had turned out in large numbers, despite R.S.A.F. workers having to work a morning shift.

At two o'clock on Sunday morning, the results became known. The nine elected candidates were the Rev. Carter (6,439), the Rev. Hodson (2,949), Betts (2,778), the Rev. Storer Toms (2,603), Gibbons (2,329)

(1) Immediately after the 1870 Education Act, many political groups did not appreciate how effectively to manipulate cumulative voting at the first School Board elections i.e. the Liberals lost the First School Board election in Birmingham on such a miscalculation.

(2) Meyers Observer, 9th March 1894.

(3) ibid., 16th March 1894.

Spicer (2,224), the Rev. Kempe (2,220), the Rev. Davies (1,978) and Cooler (1,878). There were three Progressives, three Moderates and three Independents. The plumping of votes certainly influenced the result. (1)

The editor of Meyers Observer reported in subdued tones the Church Party's defeat. There was apparently no clear voting pattern, according to Meyer.

A very large number of the voters had not supported either the Church Party or the Unsectarian Party, or either of the Independent candidates but had divided their votes among individual members of both parties, in all probability giving their support to those candidates who were known to them personally.

(2)

The Enfield School Board consisted of four clergymen, one Nonconformist minister and four traders. Although not all the Church Party or the Unsectarians were elected, all districts of the parish were represented. The balance on the Board would be fine but with two of the Independents, Toms and Carter, likely to vote with the Progressives, theirs was the majority. (3) Across the political and religious divisions, there existed a college bond between five of the members of the School Board, for Hodson, Kempe, Davies, Carter and Spicer were all graduates from Trinity College, Cambridge.

The conflicts in Enfield over the supply of school accommodation had been bitter. The conflicts were to continue on the School Board, both in the struggle of the Church Party to defend the fate of the voluntary

(1) Francis Shelton, Returning Officer, issued the list of plumper votes.

Carter	492	Hodson.....	47	Betts	90
Toms.....	92	Gibbons.....	93	Spicer.....	15
Kempe.....	32	Davies.....	69	Cooler.....	53

(2) Meyers Observer, 16th March 1894.

(3) ibid.

schools and the determination of the Progressives to build only the best.

The Working-class role in the Enfield School Board Election.

The year of the Enfield School Board saw the tentative growth of working-class political aspirations. The correspondence of working-class parents to the Education Department, the election of W.S.Richards as the Honorary Secretary of the Enfield Free and Popular Education League (1) and the selection of a working man as a Progressive candidate all indicated that working people were participating in the School Board Election. The extent of that participation was difficult to calculate; as E.P.Hennock has pointed out, manual workers who successfully stood for the Council were men of "special qualities" and therefore perhaps not representative of their class. (2) The almost exclusive middle-class manipulation of the Enfield School Board Election reflected a low level of overt working-class activity. Such a conclusion, however, was based on the evidence of the one local conservative paper, which brings into question the bias of that evidence. The year of the School Board Election was the first time that working-class activities were recorded in the columns of Meyers Observer. The establishment of the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society Education Committee and its organised activities were not recorded in the local paper, so how much less was the possibility of the reporting of open air meetings at the Royal Small Arms Factory gates or at the Radical

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- (1) Meyers Observer, 22nd November 1901. Obituary. "Mr. Richards, it will be remembered by many of the older inhabitants, was, in days gone by, wont to take an active part in the public life of the parish, particularly in regard to the School Board question." He was a Baptist and a Temperance supporter.
 - (2) E.Hennock, Fit and Proper Persons: Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth Century Urban Government (1973).

Liberal Clubs. Evidence for the formation and the activities of the Enfield Free and Popular Education League was lost. So there is a strong possibility of considerable unrecorded working-class political activity in Enfield.

Professor Simon has researched into the relationship between the growth of working-class political awareness and an articulate working-class demand for education.

The formation of new socialist groups in the 1880s marked a decisive break in working-class politics - the beginning of and a new move towards independent political organisation and activity which had repercussions in the field of trade union organisation and considerable educational implications.

(1)

Events in Enfield do not reflect all the conclusions that Professor Simon has reached. There was no evidence of a general class awareness or political militancy. There was certainly little evidence of the development of working-class educational ideas from the radical to a socialistic view. There was little evidence of a concerted working-class campaign in the Enfield School Board Election. However there was some evidence of working-class political activity, from which as Simon has argued, concern for education evolved. An example can be found in the pages of a small exercise book labelled The Minute Book of the Free Public Library Delegate Committee, which revealed Mr. Clifton as a delegate from the Enfield Branch of the Social Democratic Federation.

(2) There is no other existing evidence of the group and certainly no

(1) B.Simon, Education and the Labour Movement, 1870-1920 (1974) p.17.

(2) The Minute Book of the Free Public Library Delegate Committee, started 1st February, 1892. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries. The Committee campaigned for a Public Library to be set up.

evidence of S.D.F. activity in the School Board Election, although it is known the group still existed at the time. (1) So the evidence in Enfield indicates that some of the developments outlined by Simon, i.e. the spread of socialistic views on education, existed but not on a large scale.

W.P.McCann has also traced the sequence of working-class involvement in elementary education in the late nineteenth-century. (2) Many of McCann's conclusions are relevant to the situation in Enfield. The Trades Unions, Cooperative Societies and socialist groups were an essential part of a growing working-class awareness of the need for more education; Enfield had such organisations. McCann noted there was a deep prejudice among working people "against the administration of the education of working-class children by one of their own representatives." (3) McCann also noted that after the passing of the 1870 Education Act only a few workingmen were put forward as candidates for the School Boards. (4) Progress in labour representation was slow but McCann was able to trace a strong connection between working-class political development and a concern for education.

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- (1) The year 1894 saw an organised campaign by the S.D.F. in Enfield to recruit new members. Speakers travelled from London on the Great Eastern Railway and held open air meetings at the public Fountain, Enfield Town, every Saturday evening. George Lansbury himself came to speak. The local shopkeepers complained to Meyers Observer of the loud singing of the "Marseillaise".
 - (2) W.McCann, 'Trade Unionist, Co-operative and Socialist Organisations in Relation to Popular Education,' Ph.D., Manchester, 1960.
 - (3) ibid., p.92.
 - (4) No women, either middle-class or working-class, were very involved in the issue of elementary education in Enfield in the School Board era. The electoral registers show that no married women with property voted in local elections until 1895 and therefore no women voted in the first Enfield School Board Election. A woman was however elected to the neighbouring Edmonton School Board.

As McCann has shown, there was a long tradition in the Cooperative Movement of support for education but this was to instruct in Cooperation and was not a part of the national educational system. The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society offered such alternative education. An Education Committee was set up in 1892 offering evening classes, lectures, a lending Library and the Society's own publications. (1) The Cooperative Society however was slow to move into local politics or into the debate over the School Board Election. Although Special General Meetings were regularly called, they were never on educational issues. So McCann has traced the Labour interest in education from the Trades Union involvement in the Education League, through the radical programme of the alliance between workingmen and the Liberal Party to the development of socialistic ideals. Labour had gradually changed its definition of what education should be. Both Simon and McCann have based their research on the evidence of the industrial towns. Enfield however was in the process of industrialising. It is therefore likely that, with such small-scale development, Enfield experienced less working-class awareness, less Trades Union militancy and less political activity than the long-established communities of the great cities.

The events of the School Board campaign and the ultimate Election showed a degree of working-class participation. The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society was to play a minor role in the first Election. Nonetheless the Society's Committee voted that two committee members and the whole Education Committee should interview all the School Board candidates to

(1) The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society Minutes.

assess their opinions respecting the New Code for Evening Continuation classes. (1) The issue was not referred to again in the Minutes so it is not known whether the matter was carried out. The representatives may have questioned candidates from the floor of the many public meetings held before the Election.

Although the Trades Unions had been involved in educational matters at a national level, the Enfield Lock Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers seemed to have initiated little working-class participation in education. (2) The Minutes record a brief entry in March 1894, "Proposed and seconded we have a committee of three; Re School Board expenses." Whether this entry referred to financial support for the Trades Union candidate, Delahaye, or for the radical curate at the R.S.A.F., went unrecorded. The entry did not represent a large working-class commitment, to either a single candidate or a group, for the Union did not have a large membership, but it indicated the interests of the skilled men of the Lock.

It was the Enfield Highway Ratepayers Association who demanded representation on the School Board, the Urban District Council and the Board of Guardians. The Association was not exclusively working class, rather a mixture of shopkeepers and artisans, but it was a pressure group for working-class interests.

The Liberal-Radical Clubs in Ponders End and Enfield Highway did not organise a core of working-class protest. (3) Speakers to the Clubs concentrated on foreign affairs rather than the causes of the working

(1) The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society Minutes.

(2) Minutes of the Enfield Lock Branch of the A.S.E.

(3) There are no surviving records of these Clubs and the information about their activities in Meyers Observer are very brief.

man. In the 1890s, working men were still only represented through the Liberal Party; working-class representation was to come later with the development of the Labour Party. (1) Working-class political aspirations in Enfield were also restricted to support for the Liberal Party. It was indeed through the machinations of the local Liberal leadership that a School Board had been called in Enfield at all. So the success of the local Liberal Party was more due to the political manipulations of the local middle-class Liberal leaders than to working-class pressure. Although many working-men were in the Radical Liberal Movement, all the Radical Liberal candidates for the School Board were middle class, except for Delahaye. Although there was a higher poll at Enfield Highway in the Election than in other districts, and although there was a high proportion of working-class people, voters did not plump there for the working-class candidate. Delahaye was not elected and in his speeches, had made no direct appeal to the loyalties of the working classes. It was not until 1897, when J.H. Matthews was elected to the School Board, that a candidate made a direct appeal to the very classes that used the elementary school system. The candidate, Delahaye, was not chosen by working people but by members of the Radical Liberal Movement. It is difficult to assess whether the nomination of this working-class candidate was a reflection of working-class pressure on the selectors or an indication of a middle-class awareness of the potential power of the working-class vote.

An examination of the Election results show that people voted for the men in their district, which could be both a class response and a community response in an extended parish. The use of the cumulative

(1) E. Hennock, *Fit and Proper Persons: Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth Century Urban Government* (1973) p.270.

vote elected Carter, Betts and Cooler from the eastern districts. In such close-knit communities as Enfield Highway, Enfield Lock and Ponders End, a neighbourhood network could effectively spread information and advice on how to vote. It is difficult to estimate the degree of organisation behind the pattern of voting. Nonetheless, the effective use of plumping by working-class voters was a new aspect in local politics.

The establishment of a School Board in March 1894, with the possibility, for the first time, of representation in the eastern districts, was followed in December by the creation of the Enfield Urban District Council. With the division of Enfield into four wards, it became possible for men of the eastern districts to have a voice in local affairs. Although the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society had refused to nominate individuals for the first School Board Election, four Cooperative candidates were nominated for the election of the first Urban District Council. In the following year Cooperative candidates were put forward for the elections of the Board of Guardians. So the local Cooperative Society gradually moved into the field of local politics.

The establishment of a School Board was to be a turning point in the struggle for democratic political representation in Enfield. Hennock has made an interesting observation that seems in line with the development of events in Enfield. He noted that the municipal revolution in Birmingham had grown directly from the emergence of the Birmingham Education League, with its concern for the education of working class children. (1) The movement in Birmingham was essentially

(1) E.Hennock, Fit and Proper Persons: Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth-Century Urban Government (1973), p.80.

a middle-class movement but in Enfield it can be also argued that increased political activity came out of the School Board Election. There are two forces to be recognised in the working-class movement; an interest in education evolving from political activity, as argued by Simon and McCann, and an increased municipal interest evolving from an educational crisis, as argued by Hennock.

The conflicts revealed in the School Board Election were complex, thereby revealing the complex nature of an urbanising society. The working class had begun to comprehend their potential role. The power of the working-class vote had elected a "Democratic Parson" but the working class were soon to elect their own class representative.

(1)

The role of the working classes both in the School Board Election and during the School Board era increased as working-class participation in local affairs increased. Hennock has indicated a perspective for the events of the 1890s, which, although his terms of reference are more extensive than this study, both in date and local emphasis, is relevant to an appreciation of events in Enfield. "A project that ends in 1914 does not provide a good perspective for a study of the working-class presence on town Councils. For the years 1892-1912 are merely the beginning and are better understood in relation to what followed than what went before." (2)

(1) London Illustrated News, 24th March 1894. An article was published on the overwhelming success of the Rev. Carter at the School Board Election, entitled "The Democratic Parson".

(2) E.Hennock, Fit and Proper Persons: Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth Century Urban Government (1973), p.54.

CHAPTER FIVE.

THE CONFLICTS IN THE WORKING OF
THE ENFIELD SCHOOL BOARD, 1894-1903.

After the bitter conflicts of the School Board election, the nine newly-elected gentlemen sat down in a small room in Court House, Little Park, to start business. Despite the emotional speeches made by the Progressives during their campaign, the Enfield School Board worked meticulously to the original concept of the 1870 Education Act, in supplementing the voluntary system. They did not press for the large-scale building of Board schools which would be to the detriment of the existing Church schools. In fact, the process of accommodation can be traced among the Nonconformist members of the Board as they compromised with the representatives of the Church Party over the supply of school places in Enfield. Once elected the Nonconformists could see their majority would be threatened if Church schools closed and the Education Rate, as a result, considerably increased.

However, the degree of cooperation was tempered by the continued personal animosity and bitterness on the Board. Fierce arguments raged at committee; Carter and Betts were unable to be civil to one another, Hodson and Toms were in dispute and J.H. Matthews, when elected in 1897, had an unguarded tongue which caused serious problems for the Board.(1) The personal tact of George Spicer did much to ease the personal bitterness existing among the members. (2)

The election of a School Board obviously heightened the conflict inherent in the "Dual System" in Enfield at a time when there was tension

(1) There was a serious dispute, ending in fisticuffs in the Market Place, Enfield Town, between Carter and Matthews, which was resolved by an external enquiry led by MacNamara M.P. Meyers Observer, 22nd June 1900.

(2) ibid., 10th March 1911. "Careful to a degree in his desire to be fair to all parties, he combined with sagacious administration a cheery optimism even in the midst of many and diverse difficulties; and very much of whatever measure of success has attended the development of our public elementary schools is directly attributable to his solicitude and watchful care."

at a national level over the issues of elementary education. The Church Party, in the nineties, was under great financial duress and the Church looked to the Conservative Party, who came to power in June, 1895, to assist in the survival of the voluntary system.

The sense of threat experienced by members of the Church Party manifested itself in the continuous resistance on the School Board to the questions of Board school accommodation and the quality of education. A rapidly increasing population meant that the greatest areas of conflict was over the supply of school accommodation. In the pursuit of supplying sufficient elementary school places, the Enfield School Board inevitably threatened the existing Church schools. There were many disputes in the planning of each new Board school. The calculation of the degree of deficiency was an issue of further dispute; the Church Party argued that while the Church schools were not full there was little need for more schools and the Progressives responded with the report of Board school head teachers of a continuous pressure for admission. In the nine years of the School Board's existence, over five thousand Board school places were provided while the accommodation in the Church schools was held consistently at four and a half thousand places. The Progressive members of the Board had pledged not only to build sufficient school places but also to maintain a high standard of education. The Church Party felt threatened by the inability to compete with such standards, for the Managers of the Church schools were never in sufficiently strong financial position to be able to improve the quality of education. There were many conflicts on the School Board over economy, quality and school attendance but the underlying issue was always the defence and preservation of the voluntary system.

The Enfield School Board set a good standard of buildings, equipment, curriculum and staffing. Such were the beneficial results of the integration of the middle-class and working-class members, the Nonconformists and the Anglicans and the laity and the clergy in dealing with the issue of the supply of elementary school accommodation.

The Enfield School Board, 1894-1903.

The First School Board, 1894-97.

The balance on the first School Board was in favour of the Progressive Party; Spicer, Betts and Cooler were the Progressives, Hodson, Kempe and Davies were the Moderates, and Gibbon, Carter and Toms were Independents. Hodson was elected Chairman of the Board and Gibbon, a Nonconformist, was elected Vice-Chairman. The balance of the Board was only slightly affected by the resignation on the grounds of ill-health of Ebenezer Gibbon in July 1896. John Walker Ford J.P., benefactor of the Enfield voluntary schools, took his place with the general consent of the Board. Although Gibbon was a Nonconformist, while Ford was an Anglican, the fact that Gibbon had always voted with the Church Party meant little change on the Board. The Rev. Davies became the new Vice-Chairman.

During the period of the first School Board, three existing schools came under the control of the Board; the rural dame school at Botany Bay, 28th January 1895, the British Schools at Chase Side, 29th January 1895 and the Lock Government Schools, 30th April 1895.

Plans were initiated for the building of three new Board schools, two of which opened before the election of the second School Board, Bush Hill Park Board School and Chesterfield Road School.

The Second School Board, 1897-1900.

The Progressives won a large majority at the second School Board election. Three new members were elected to the Board, while the Rev. Storer Toms

was not elected. The new members were W. Field, a timber merchant at Ponders End (Church Party), F.J.Hinton, businessman and unsuccessful candidate at the first election (Progressive) and J.H.Matthews, a mechanic at the Royal Small Arms Factory (Independent).

The balance of the second School Board was in favour of the Progressives. There were four Progressives, Spicer, Betts, Cooler and Hinton, three Moderates, Hodson, Kempe and Field, and two Independents, Carter and Matthews, both from Enfield Lock. Spicer was elected Chairman of the Board, an office he held until 1903, and Hodson was Vice-Chairman. When Walter Cooler resigned in January 1898 he was replaced by the Rev. Storer Toms.

During the time of the second School Board, Alma Road Board School was opened and extensions were built to both Bush Hill Park Board School and Chesterfield Road Board School.

The election of a working man on the Enfield School Board did not change the existing balance on the Board. Although Matthews stood as an Independent, his views were those of the Progressives. Matthews had recorded the second highest vote in the election; he received 3,707 votes, with 269 plumpers. Of little significance to the balance of the Board, it was an important step towards working-class representation in local government.

It was the first time that J.H.Matthews had sought public office. For many years he had been the Health Visitor for the Provident Society of the R.S.A.F. (1) An active member of the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society, serving on various committees, Matthews initiated the expansion

(1) Minutes of the Provident Society, R.S.A.F. Enfield Lock.

of the Society; he called for the opening of a Butchery Department, the opening of new Stores and the formation of a Cooperative Building Society. (1) Matthews was also a dedicated member of the Enfield Highway Radical and Liberal Club and financed the establishment of a Progressive Club in Ponders End. At the opening of the Club Matthews outlined the aims.

They intended to do a great deal of work which the Liberal Party did not touch. Party politics were not worth much; it was the politics which concerned their everyday life that interested them. Let them see that there were schools for their children and school places for every child, whether boy or girl.

(2)

A man of some property, J.H. Matthews was a committee member of the Enfield Highway Ratepayers Association. Earning himself a reputation as a man who stood for the improvement of civic amenities, he was nominated by the Association to stand for the Enfield School Board. It is not known whether Matthews was a skilled man at the R.S.A.F., though he represented the Barrel Room on the Provident Society committee. His father "Josh" Matthews was skilled for he was, for many years, an active member of the A.S.E. However there is evidence of a breach between "Josh" Matthews and the Union which may have influenced his son from later joining. (3) J.H. Matthews was certainly a man of some substance in his community and he was little influenced by current socialistic ideas. A small dapper man, born in Bristol, with a big smart wife, he was held in some awe by local residents because of his money-lending business. (4)

(1) Minutes of the Enfield Highway Cooperative Society, Enfield Highway.

(2) The Chronicle, 7th October 1898.

(3) Minutes of the Enfield Lock Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. 1865- the present day.

(4) Personal reminiscences of Mr. Camp.

Matthews stood as an Independent in the election because he argued that not only Church and Chapel were interested in education but the working classes too. He strongly believed that only a working man should represent working-class interests. He might not be ideal, he told an audience, but he was offering to help workingmen if they would support him. (1)

Matthews therefore stood as a representative of the working-class struggle between east and western Enfield, seeking an amelioration of working-class living conditions. He was determined that the working man must join the local power structure to effect change. At the close of the Enfield School Board, "Jack" Matthews admitted that he had been offered a co-opted seat on the new Education Committee, "but as a worker, he decided not to take it. He could not be a member by cooption: he meant to wait, and see if he could not fight his way there." (2)

Matthews was eventually elected to the Enfield Urban District Council in 1910.

The Third School Board, 1900-03.

The third School Board election was uncontested. On January 4th 1901 Carter resigned, with his subsequent induction to St. Matthew's, City Road. The Rev. Davies was invited to replace Carter. In November 1901 Hinton moved away to Clacton, leaving a vacancy to be filled by F.Harrison, a Nonconformist, from Wellington Road, Bush Hill Park.

The new Chase Side Board School was opened during the third School Board era. Plans for a further school at Ponders End were curtailed by the passage of the 1902 Education Act. The Progressives on the School Board

(1) Meyers Observer, 26th February 1897.

(2) ibid., 3rd April 1903.

realised their days were numbered. They had built four large schools and upheld a high standard of elementary education but they had played an accommodating role in supplying school places and had not sought to challenge the Church's role in elementary education.

The Conflict of School Board Elections.

The second School Board election was held in February 1897. There were twelve candidates for the nine seats on the Board. The Church Party candidates were H.Allen, W.Field, G.Hodson, E.Kempe and J.Ford. The Progressive candidates were G.Spicer, E.Betts, W.Cooler and F.Hinton. There were three Independents: C.Carter, Storer Toms and J.Matthews. The main issue of the election was economy. F.J.Fitch, presiding over a Progressive campaign meeting said, "The cry that the Board must be economical was a truism; everybody ought to be economical, but the efficiency of the education must not be sacrificed to economy." (1) At a Moderate meeting chaired by H.C.B.Bowles J.P., all the Church candidates reaffirmed their belief that religion was the basis of all education and that overspending must be checked. (2)

There was an opportunity for the Rev. Hodson to explain his views at a public meeting in St. Matthew's Schoolroom, Ponders End. (3) Why did the Progressives say he was against education when he had worked for it all his life? He said that he did not believe that the Board should swallow up all the schools in the parish. He wanted good secular and good religious education together.

(1) Meyers Observer, 19th February 1897.

(2) ibid.

(3) ibid., 26th February 1897.

TABLE X. The number of voters in Enfield in the second School Board election, 1897.

District	No. of voters	No. who voted	% no. who voted
The Town	1,785	977	54
Brigadier Hill	1,808	791	43
Ordnance Rd, Enfield Highway	2,050	1,336	65
Ponders End	1,757	794	45

(1)

(1) Meyers Observer, 5th March 1897.

J.H.Matthews also addressed several meetings and outlined his beliefs in small neighbourhood schools, good buildings, central halls, deal desks and asphalt playgrounds.

The Progressives won the election but the Rev. Storer Toms was not elected. The editor of Meyers Observer noted that many voters in eastern Enfield voted for candidates from the east regardless of whether they were Progressives or Moderates. The eastern candidates also received the highest number of plumpers.

The second School Board election generated as little local interest as the first; in both elections 53% of the population voted. The working-class vote in Enfield Highway had recorded the highest percentage of voters. The return of a working-class candidate reflected such a positive local interest. (See Table X).

In the event, the Third School Board election excited even less interest. There was in fact an uncontested election when only the existing members of the Board were nominated. Perhaps this apathy resulted from the general knowledge that an important Education Act was imminent.

The editor of Meyers Observer saw the lack of nominees as a general mark of appreciation of the work of the School Board. So the Clerk of the School Board, Mr. Hepworth, was duly able to record in the Minutes that the members of the Board were re-elected. (1)

The third School Board continued until April 1903, when control of elementary education passed into the hands of the newly-constituted Education Committee of the Enfield Urban District Council.

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 20th March 1900.

Deficiency as an aspect of conflict on the Enfield School Board.

The first steps of the School Board in 1894 were to elect the officers of the committee, appoint a School Attendance Officer, rent a room and examine the areas of Enfield in need of elementary schools. The renting of the room was uncontroversial while the other issues were not. The Progressives felt out-manoeuvred by the election of Hodson and Gibbon as officers. The Progressives also objected to the reappointment of Mr. Head, as School Attendance Officer. They felt that his views as an active member of the Ponders End Conservative Association were prejudicial to the work of the Board. The area of greatest dispute was in deciding where to build schools and for how many children. It was decided that three schools should be built; a school for 1,000 children at Enfield Lock, a school for 300 boys at Ponders End and a school for 150 girls in Bush Hill Park. The supply of school accommodation in the working-class areas in Enfield was to be contentious.

Bush Hill Park Board School and Deficiency.

At the third meeting of the Enfield School Board, a deputation was received from Bush Hill Park, protesting against the inadequate accommodation proposed. Mr. Hinton, unsuccessful at the polls, led a group of residents representing both working-class and lower middle-class interests.

The School Board felt the need for more accurate information on the numbers of children in the Bush Hill Park district. The local registrar was asked to supply returns on the births and deaths of all children under fourteen years of age. (1) Once the number of children had been

(1) The Census showed 1,227 children in Bush Hill Park (66 over five years of age were not in school. 185 children were between the ages of 3-5.) There was a high percentage of children in the community.



II. Bush Hill Park Board School.

soundly established, the Board revised the figures for the school accommodation needed. Mr. Betts wanted a school for 1,000 children, while G.Spicer felt that in view of the expanding population 1,500 places should be supplied. The Rev. Kempe proposed a school for 400 places while the Rev. Hodson felt a school for 300 was nearer the district's needs. Ebenezer Gibbon feared that any school built would be empty. (1) Eventually it was decided to build for 600 places. Although the Progressives had had to compromise over the number to build for, they were determined to settle for nothing less than £10 per head for the cost of the building. Hodson and Kempe, who wanted a costing of £6 per head, were outvoted. (2)

Bush Hill Park, the first purpose built Board school in Enfield, was opened on 8th June, 1896. It was, and still is, a finely ornamented building with a large school hall. There were two Departments; the Girls Department on the ground floor and the Boys Department on the first floor. Both Departments offered accommodation for 300 children each. There was no Infant Department because of the close proximity of the Bush Hill Park Voluntary School.

The Church Party were openly critical of the building.

The New Board school or rather the palace at Bush Hill Park is to be opened on Monday, June 8th. It is certainly a fine building and has been carried out in a manner most creditable to Messrs. Fairhead the contractors. The only drawback to our admiration is the cost to the rate-payers. We are sure that neither Lord Salisbury or Lord Rosebery in their school days at Eton had any conception of such magnificence, and we do not suppose that the education given will be any better in consequence.

(3)

(1) Meyers Observer, 25th May 1894.

(2) The school buildings of the Enfield School Board were certainly superior to those built by the Tottenham School Board and the Edmonton School Board.

(3) Enfield Parish Magazine, June 1896.

TABLE XI. Children admitted to Bush Hill Park Board School,
June 1896.

	Boys	Girls
Bush Hill Park Voluntary Schools	79	115
St. James', Enfield Highway	40	8
St. Matthew's, Ponders End	4	8
St. Andrew's, Enfield Town	120	86
Upper Grade Girls		6
Church School of Industry		5
Total	243	148

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 19th June 1896.

The School Board instructed Hepworth, clerk to the Board and former Headmaster at the Lock Government Schools, to record the new admissions to the school. On the first day of opening, 245 boys and 192 girls registered. By the end of the first week, the numbers had risen to 273 boys and 208 girls. (See Table XI). These figures showed that all the girls had already been in school, while only 25 boys had apparently previously not been in school. (1)

There was considerable dispute on the School Board over these figures. The Church Party were quick to point out that Forster's Education Act had meant Board schools to supplement the voluntary schools and not empty them. Storer Toms defended the situation by saying it showed "that the parents had not a burning desire for denominational teaching." (2) What it surely indicated was the desire of parents to send their children to a free neighbourhood school.

The Education Department was concerned that the Bush Hill Park Voluntary School was housed in a temporary building. The Department instructed the Board to supply 159 Infant places in the Bush Hill Park Board School and to increase both the Girls and Boys Departments by 200 each. (3) The Board was well aware of the pressures of an increasing population through the constant letters of complaint from the Headmistress of the Girls Department. The Board therefore decided to build an Infant Department for 200; a decision that was modified by the Department. In September 1899, the new extension was opened and the classes filled immediately with 140 children. An iron hut had also been erected on

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 19th June 1896.

(2) Meyers Observer, 19th June 1896.

(3) ibid., 3rd December 1896.

the Bush Hill Park site to be used as a School for the Deaf. (1)

By the end of 1900, there was a particular need for more Infant accommodation. Every Department was grossly overcrowded. There were 960 school places and 1,046 children on roll. Hodson was against further building as the Bush Hill Park Voluntary School was not full. Eventually a compromise was reached; the Headmaster and Headmistress of the Board school must refuse admission to children already in a voluntary school. (2)

A few months later the total number of children had increased to 266. The Board decided that an extension must be built to increase the accommodation in all three Departments. The Education Department refused permission for such a large extension, having previously passed an extension of a similar size at Chesterfield Road Board School. The Board were frustrated by the Department's decision for it heralded a changing political climate. Mr. Hinton noted, "This new departure in the Department's policy shows the deliberate attempt to lessen the importance of School Boards." (3)

By the end of the Enfield School Board, the issue of deficiency in Bush Hill Park was unresolved.

Chesterfield Road Board School and Deficiency.

The closure of the Lock Government Schools meant that a large school had to be built in Enfield Highway. Although the Rev. Hodson was concerned about the nearness of the Board site to the Ordnance Road National School, he did not deny deficiency. The School Board, needing to ease

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 1st November 1898.

(2) Meyers Observer, 7th December 1900.

(3) ibid., 3rd January 1902.



III. Chesterfield Road Board School.

the problem at once, tried to find suitable temporary accommodation. The Liberal and Radical Club in Totteridge Road was considered and then rejected after the protest of the Church Party. (1) The Education Department soon confirmed the suitability of the site at Chesterfield Road, although stipulating that the Board must build a small Infants school near Enfield Lock. (2)

The Board decided to build for 1,000 children; 300 girls, 250 boys and 350 Infants. The Rev. Carter wanted an Infant Department of 400. A furious row broke out between Carter and Hodson; Hodson wanted an Infant school at the Lock for 150 children. Such a school, the length of Ordnance Road distant from the Ordnance Road National School, would be less competitive than a large Department in the Board school. A Census was carried out to establish how many Infants lived in the Enfield Highway district. (See Table XII). The Board therefore dropped the scheme for a small school near the Lock, although the Department continued to press the matter.

The architect was instructed to build twelve classrooms and a central hall. (3) The Board had planned to build for 650 seniors and 190 Infants, but the Department insisted that they built for 763 seniors and 430 Infants. The War Department was duly requested to allow the continued use of the factory site until Chesterfield Road Board School was built. (4)

(1) The Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 21st June 1894.

(2) ibid., 1st November 1894.

(3) There was much dispute on the Board over central halls. The Church Party saw them as an extravagance. Spicer said that they were needed for drill and to offer a meeting place for the community.

(4) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 7th February 1895.

TABLE XII. The distribution of children in the Enfield Highway area.

Children living near the Canal	51
Children living near Chesterfield Road	630
Children in the Highway and Freezywater	98

(1)

TABLE XIII. The rate of admission of new children to Chesterfield Road Board School, January 1897.

	First day	Fifth day
Boys	414	425
Girls	355	388
Infants	280	295
TOTAL	1,049	1,106

(2)

TABLE XIV. Children admitted to Chesterfield Road Board School, January 1897.

	Boys	Girls	Infants
St.James', Enfield Highway	37	40	0
Ordnance Infants	0	0	35
Other elementary schools	28	23	10
Private schools	3	8	5
Never been to school	1	1	30

(3)

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 3rd January, 1895.

(2) ibid., 14th January 1897.

(3) ibid.

The Lock Government Schools were taken over by the School Board on the 2nd May, 1895. The Rev. Carter made a special visit to the schools to explain the significance of the day. (1)

The Manual Instruction Room and the Cookery Room were the first buildings to be completed on the site, and the rooms were opened as an elementary school on 1st September, 1896. On the opening day 45 boys and 19 girls sought admission, while by the 17th of the month, there were 95 boys and 82 girls.

The Chesterfield Road Board School officially opened in January, 1897. They were overcrowded immediately. (See Table XIII). Again Mr. Hepworth was instructed to find out where the children had come from. (See Table XIV). A small Infant school opened at the factory school premises on the same day as the new Board school, with only 18 pupils, as the Rev. Carter had predicted.

The Boys Department was overcrowded by May and the School Board realised they must build a Junior Mixed school for 150 more children. It was decided to shut the Lock Infant school at the end of the year because of the low numbers, although the site was used to house temporarily 86 Infants from the Board school to ease overcrowding. (2)

J.H. Matthews, who worked at the R.S.A.F., called for a committee to investigate the viability of continuing a small Infant school at the Lock. It was decided that a committee of three, Matthews, Hodson and Kempe, should look for an alternative site. (3)

(1) Lock Government School Logbook, 2nd May 1895, Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

(2) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 14th January 1897.

(3) ibid., 17th June 1897.

TABLE XV. Children admitted to Alma Road Board School, June 1897.

	Boys	Infants
Bush Hill Park Voluntary Schools	12	1
St. Matthew's, Ponders End	112	63
St. James', Enfield Highway	17	1
St. Mary's, R.C.	9	23
From other schools	6	6
Never been to school	3	50

(1)

TABLE XVI. School accommodation in Ponders End, 1898.

	June 98.	Sept. 98
St. Matthew's Mixed	255	245
St. Matthew's Infants	259	256
St. Mary's, R.C.	163	161
Alma Road Boys	340	340
Alma Road Infants	255	295
TOTAL	1,272	1,297

(2)

TABLE XVII. The number of children in Ponders End, 1898.

Ages	Boys	Girls	Total
Under 3	258	301	559
3-5 years	177	185	362
5-13 years	606	577	1,183
13-14 years	56	55	111
TOTAL	1,097	1,118	2,215

(3)

(1) Minutes of Enfield School Board, 3rd June 1897.

(2) ibid., 20th September 1898.

(3) ibid.

A Junior Mixed Department opened on 1st November 1898. Seven months later, a sub-committee of the School Board was set up to consider what further accommodation was needed. (1) The Board decided against building a small school at the Lock for reasons of economy but concluded that a new Junior Mixed school for 420 children had to be built. (2) A temporary school opened at Totteridge Road Baptist Chapel with 60 pupils. (3) The Board finally decided to build for a further 450 children on the Chesterfield Road site.

The continuous housing development at Enfield Lock, Freezywater and Enfield Highway meant that there was a constant deficiency of school accommodation.

Alma Road Board School and Deficiency.

Alma Road Board School was the third Board school to be built. It was opened in Ponders End in May, 1897. The first step of the Board had been to call for a census of the children in Ponders End between the ages of 3-14. (4) The Board eventually decided to build for 250 boys and 150 Infants as the St. Matthew's Girls School was considered sufficient accommodation for girls in the area. (5)

The Ponders End Ratepayers Association was dissatisfied with the reports of the planned school accommodation. They went in deputation to the Board to plead for accommodation for 800 children. (6) A special meeting of the School Board was called to review the matter with the

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 20th June 1899.

(2) Meyers Observer, 20th October 1899.

(3) ibid., 22nd June 1900.

(4) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 17th May 1894.

(5) ibid., 2nd August 1894.

(6) ibid., 6th September 1894.

subsequent decision to build for 400 boys and 250 Infants. (1)

Argument over accommodation continued when the Ponders End Ratepayers Association held a house-to-house census showing 200 children not in school. The Manager of St. Mary's Catholic school also protested that the school would be depleted when a new Board school opened on the opposite side of the road. The Board, nonetheless, did not heed these criticisms.

Similarly with the Bush Hill Park School, the Progressives voted to build a central hall and the costing to be £10 per pupil for the whole building. The Church Party fought bitterly against such unnecessary expense.

Aware of the existing deficiency, the School Board opened a temporary Boys school in the Baptist Chapel, South Street. (2) On the first day there were 46 pupils but by September the number had risen to 142. The school was very successful and met with the full approval of the H.M.I.

When the Alma Road Board School was opened in May, 1897, 132 boys were transferred from the temporary school. On the first day there were 303 new admissions; 159 boys and 144 Infants. (3) A survey showed from where the pupils had come. (See Table XV).

Yet again there had been a large movement of children away from the voluntary schools. That the Board schools were free while the voluntary schools remained fee-paying was a strong motive for the move.

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 13th September 1894.

(2) ibid., 22nd April 1895.

(3) ibid., 3rd June 1897.



IV. Alma Road Board School.

The school was soon overcrowded and the Board was forced to make plans for an extension on the site. (1) The question of accommodation for Girls became pressing too, and it was decided to build a Girls Department for 300. (2) A survey was made to assess the number of children needing schooling in the Ponders End area. It was established that while there were 1,297 school places there were 2,215 children of school age. (See Tables XVI and XVII).

The Education Department wrote to insist that the Board must build at once in Ponders End. The Church Party was adamantly against such a decision, fearing for the fate of St. Matthew's School. J.H. Matthews offered an acceptable compromise that the Board should build for 300 girls but at first limit admission to 150. (3) Meanwhile a temporary Girls school was opened in the Chapel in South Street, then in the hands of the Wesleyans. (4) The Education Department stated that the school should accommodate 96 pupils, but, by May, the number on roll exceeded that number. (5)

The Board decided, in view of the growth of housing to the west of Ponders End High Road, to buy a site in Southbury Road for a future school. Already there was some controversy on the Board over whether the policy should be to build small neighbourhood schools or extend the already large Board schools.

When the new extension to Alma Road Board School opened on 10th May 1901, 110 girls transferred from the temporary school, while 38 children

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 1st July 1897.

(2) ibid., 21st June 1898.

(3) ibid., 4th October 1898.

(4) Meyers Observer, 17th January 1899.

(5) ibid., 2nd May 1899.

moved up from the Infants Department. There remained 22 vacancies. So on the first day the Girls Department had to refuse admission to 60 children. In October, the Board felt forced to increase accommodation to 200 places, and, in March 1902 this was further increased to 250 places.

Deficiency of school accommodation was discussed yet again by the Board. (1) There was conflict whether to build a further extension on the Alma Road site, which Hodson and Spicer supported, or build a new school at Southbury Road, supported by Betts, Toms and Matthews. (2) Eventually the issue was left over for the new Education Committee to resolve.

Chase Side Board School and Deficiency.

The three main Board schools had been built in eastern Enfield where deficiency had been large; however the years of the School Board saw considerable housing development in Chase Side and the Lancaster Road area. As early as March 1896, the Department of Education wrote to the Board about the severe overcrowding in the Chase Side Board school, formerly the British schools. In the following year, the Education Department suspended payment of the annual grant due to the poor conditions at the school. (3) The School Board was therefore forced to act. It was decided to build a new school for 920 children; 320 girls, 320 boys and 280 Infants. (4) There was considerable dispute over accommodation, for the Church Party were defensive about the many voluntary schools in the Enfield Town area, namely St. Michael's, St. Andrew's and Gordon Lane schools. Despite the protests of the Rev.

(1) Meyers Observer, 18th July 1902.

(2) ibid., 28th October 1902.

(3) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 1st April 1897.

(4) ibid., 4th November 1897.

Hodson, the Board revised their numbers to 1,160 places; 400 girls, 400 boys and 360 Infants. Conflict delayed the buying of land, the decisions on specifications and the eventual building of the school.

A survey of the nearby voluntary schools showed that they too were grossly overcrowded; St. Michael's Schools had 626 places and 774 on roll while the Chase Side Board School had 345 places and 401 on roll. In view of this evidence, the School Board decided they must supply 815 new school places, as well as the 345 places transferred from the old school. (1) While building went ahead, the Board was alarmed to receive a letter from the Poor Law Guardians stating that the children at Chase Farm Poor Law School would in future attend the Chase Side Board School. (2) The Board was horrified at the proposal that the financial responsibility for these children was being transferred from the Guardians to the School Board; they refused.

The new school opened on the 15th April 1901. As usual, a survey was made of the new admissions; there were 151 girls, 131 boys and 69 Infants. (See Table XVIII). The Church Party were highly indignant that children had been drawn from the surrounding voluntary schools.

We are led to suppose that the object of the magnificent new school buildings lately opened at Chase Side is to provide accommodation for those children for whom no such accommodation existed previous to their erection; and to that nobody could reasonably take objection. But the practical working has been to take away from the voluntary schools more than 200 children already on their books, and to leave many of the children, for whose accommodation these new buildings were professedly erected, still free to run the streets.

(3)

(1) Meyers Observer, 6th September 1898.

(2) ibid., 31st January 1899.

(3) ibid., 19th April 1901.

TABLE XVIII. Children admitted to Chase Side Board School, April 1901.

	Boys	Girls	Infants
St. Michael's Schools	54	47	10
St. Andrew's Schools	49	37	7
Upper Grade	1	1	2
St. John's, Clay Hill	5	8	1
St. Luke's	5	9	5
Gordon Lane	4	0	1
Forty Hill Schools	2	2	0
Church School of Industry	0	3	0
Bush Hill Park Board School	0	3	0
Private schools	5	7	1
Ponders End	1	0	0
Not on any register	5	24	42

(1)

(1) Meyers Observer, 19th April 1901.

There was a furious row on the Board, led by Prebendary Hodson; Hodson argued that non-attenders should have priority in the Board school vacancies. J.H.Matthews supported the Vicar in this view. Hodson then asserted that the voluntary schools would not take in children who had not been to schools before because he ~~thought the~~ Board schools should take such children. Again J.H.Matthews agreed, for he believed that the most deprived children should benefit from the superior facilities of the Board schools. Eventually Hodson proposed a compromise that the new school should take no more than 300 girls and 300 boys. The Board reluctantly agreed. (1)

The same argument continued at subsequent Board meetings. The Department wrote to the School Board stating that St. Michael's was grossly overcrowded and the Board should make available more school places. Hodson however refused to annul the previous agreement. (2)

The issue was not resolved until the Department gave permission for the numbers to be increased at Chase Side Board School to 385 girls and 385 boys. The persistence of Hodson showed the precarious position of the voluntary schools in Enfield. (3) Until the opening of the Chase Side Board School Hodson had the psychological advantage of offering more elementary school places than the School Board. Once that advantage had been lost, it was harder to maintain the morale of the Church school managers and staff. The mood in the government, however, helped the position of the voluntary schools. The action of the Department in increasing the accommodation at Chase Side Board School only when the Vicar of Enfield agreed was symptomatic of the changing attitudes of

(1) Meyers Observer, 26th April 1901.

(2) ibid., 19th July 1901.

(3) ibid., 26th April 1901.

the Department.

The problem of deficiency was exacerbated by the continuous demands of the Board of Guardians that the Chase Side Board School should take 50 Poor Law children. (1) Such children had not previously been included in the calculations of educational deficiency. In December, the Poor Law children were marched in crocodile down the hill to Chase Side School, where they were refused entry by Mr. Vincent, the headmaster.(2) The School Board managed to evade the problem until its dissolution.

Deficiency under the Enfield School Board.

During the period of the Enfield School Board there was a continuous deficiency of elementary school accommodation. The Enfield School Board Handbook, 1898-1901, published a chart revealing the discrepancy between school accommodation and the number of scholars. (See Table XIX). A comparison between the total number of school places and the total number of children on roll showed that throughout the School Board era there was an excess of children. With each school overcrowded the schools could presumably only function efficiently if the attendance figures were low.

The Board was consequently fully aware of the pressing need for accommodation and constantly monitored the increase in population. (see Table XX). Hepworth was regularly instructed to carry out a district census or liaise with the Building Surveyor of the E.U.D.C. to establish the rate of building in the parish. The apparent reluctance of the Board to initiate building showed more concern for economy than for deficiency.

(1) Meyers Observer, 26th September 1902.

(2) ibid., 5th December 1902.

TABLE XIX. Accommodation in schools and the numbers on roll 1894-97.

Date	Total accommodation	Total number on roll
December 1894	4,976	5,944
December 1895	5,171	6,333
December 1896	5,896	6,861
December 1897	6,963	7,555

(1)

TABLE XX. The number of newly-built houses in Enfield 1898.

Date	Number of new houses
1896	194
1897	131
1898	155
Being built	366
Plans submitted	463

(2)

(1) The Enfield School Board Handbook, 1898-1901. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

(2) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 6th December 1898.

The large number of voluntary school children who attended the Board schools at their opening would superficially support the opinion that Hodson was correct to challenge the supply of Board school accommodation. However the numbers of voluntary school pupils were not radically reduced by the existence of the new Board schools. (See Appendix IV). There were 5,010 children on the Church school books in March 1896 (just prior to the opening of the first new Board school) and 4,140 children in March 1903. Although there had been a significant drop of 870 pupils on roll, in the seven year period, it had not led to the demise of a single Church school in Enfield.

The total increase in school population, 1896-1903, can also be traced in Appendix IV. At the opening of each Board school, the total number of pupils increased. The most significant jump was the opening of Chase Side Board School. The increase of pupils overall was 792 between February and September, 1901, while the decline in the numbers on the Church school rolls was only 83. So although the Clerk of the School Board reported that new pupils were recruited from the voluntary schools as each new Board school opened, the voluntary school figures do not confirm that assertion. It is difficult to explain these figures. The surveys at the opening of each new school showed that 994 children came from the voluntary schools, yet the number of children in the voluntary schools did not drop so dramatically. The recruitment of younger children could have filled the schoolrooms. (1)

The School Board was therefore fully aware of the continuing deficiency. The slowness of the Board to keep pace with the growing population was a

(1) The personal memories of elderly Enfield residents who were interviewed revealed the fact that all went to school at the early age of three or four.

measure of the power of the Church Party both on the Board and within the community. As the Church Party increasingly struggled to raise funds for the voluntary schools, so their tactics delayed the full implementation of the power of the Board in supplying school accommodation.

Attendance as an aspect of conflict on the School Board.

As well as deficiency of school accommodation, there was conflict on the School Board over the issue of school attendance. Throughout the School Board era the attendance figures of the Church schools were lower than the Board schools. (See Appendix IV). Although the Progressives referred to this fact frequently, it was J.H. Matthews who was the most concerned over the problem of low school attendance. He criticised the low figures of the Church schools, accusing the managers of maintaining low attendance in order to make the schools look empty, thereby stopping a Board school being built. (1) Matthews further asserted that on an average day up to 900 children were absent from the voluntary schools, while the total number on roll was less than 5,000 children. (2) Matthews constantly called for better attendance on the grounds that the schools could earn better government grants. He was bothered by the number of children he saw roaming the streets and not attending school.

It was the policy of the Enfield School Board to reward good attendance with prizes as an inducement to further good practice. Hodson questioned the legality of the Board donating a large number of prizes and he wrote to the Education Department for clarification of the law.

(1) Meyers Observer, 24th June 1898.

(2) ibid., 7th October 1898.

Despite such criticism, the majority of the School Board voted that a number of prizes and certificates should be given each year "to scholars who have especially distinguished themselves throughout the school year for regular punctual attendance, good conduct and good progress." (1)

The Education Department replied to Hodson's query. "Prizes for regular attendance are legal only where they are given to those children whose attendances have been best, and not where they are given to all children whose attendances have reached a prescribed minimum number."

(2) Hodson was against the liberal donation of prizes because he knew children could be drawn away from the Church schools by such fickle rewards. (3) He also knew he could not afford to compete by offering equally attractive prizes in the Church schools.

The matter of prizes was referred to the General Sub-committee and a policy was formulated.

That the number of children in each standard eligible to receive prizes should not exceed the following percentages on the number of children on the book at the end of the school year: Infants Department 15%, Standards 0 and I 10%, Standards II and III 20%, Standards IV and V 30% and Standards VI and VII 50%.

(4)

The committee also established the value of the prizes to be given: Infants 9d, Standards I and II 1/0, Standards II and IV 1/6, Standard V 2/4, Standard VI 3/3 and Standard VII 5/0 each. The School Board

(1) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 15th April 1899.

(2) Meyers Observer, 19th July 1898.

(3) Mrs. Theobald recalled moving from St. Michael's school to Chase Side Board school (the former British schools) on the whim of getting biscuits and sweets on Friday afternoons.

(4) General Sub-committee Book, Enfield School Board, 17th July 1899.

TABLE XXI. Percentage attendance of pupils on roll, comparing London elementary schools with Enfield elementary schools, 1897-1903.

Date	London Schools			Enfield Schools		
	Board	Voluntary	Av.Att.	Board	Voluntary	Av.Att.
1897	81.0	78.3	80.2	80.8	74.6	77.7
1900	82.0	79.4	81.2	85.4	82.5	83.9
1901	83.4	80.2	82.5	86.2	85.2	85.7
1902	84.7	81.4	83.7	90.6	86.6	88.6
1903	86.4	83.4	85.6	86.3	82.5	84.4

(1)

(1) D.Rubinstein, School Attendance in London 1870-1904 (1969) p.112 and Reports of the School Attendance Officer to the Enfield School Board.

was determined to improve attendance by reward. Generous to their conscientious pupils, in October 1899, the Board gave away 826 prizes, in July 1900 713 prizes, July 1901 872 prizes and July 1902 983 prizes.

School attendance was a constant problem for the Enfield School Board. In comparison with the London School Board, Enfield had slightly better school attendance figures. (See Table XXI). There was nonetheless a gradual improvement in attendance throughout the period of the Enfield School Board.

The School Board appointed a Second School Attendance Officer in January 1898 to assist in pursuing the large number of truants and child workers. (1) The parish was divided into two districts; Mr. Head was to work in the western districts where school attendance was worse and Mr. Johnson in the eastern districts.

Although the appointment of a new officer did not noticeably increase the number of summonses, it was obvious that Mr. Johnson managed to persuade children back into school. In the summary of the School Board meeting, Meyers Observer noted that the new School Attendance Officer had issued 256 orders and 505 warnings. (2) The Officer was keen to perform his duties and suggested to the School Attendance Committee that a scheme should be devised whereby children leaving school could be followed up and prevented from "drifting onto the streets." (3) J.H. Matthews, despite such conscientiousness, berated the achievements of the School Attendance Officers, to the consternation of the rest of the Board.

(1) Meyers Observer, 20th January 1898.

(2) ibid., 17th May 1898.

(3) ibid., 20th September 1898.

Unfortunately the records of the School Attendance Committee give little detail of the cases dealt with by Messrs. Head and Johnson. (1) It is therefore difficult to assess both the factors that kept school attendance low and the factors that led to an eventual improvement. J.H. Matthews was always keen to point out that working-class parents were demanding School Board places rather than Church school places for their children. If working-class parents were better motivated to send their children to Board schools, the establishment of the Enfield School Board was a factor in the gradual improvement of school attendance. (2)

The Church schools as an aspect of conflict on the School Board.

The crisis of the voluntary schools in Enfield, 1894-1903, was reflected in the activity of the Church Party on the Enfield School Board. The conflicts were a result of the declining fortunes of the voluntary schools. Not only did the Church Party resist the expansion of Board School accommodation but they resisted the policies of the Progressives over other educational issues. Implicit in the outlook of the Progressives was a certain concept of the quality of education. The cries for economy from the Church Party were attacks on the quality of education provided. The whole issue of economy was a political judgement on what education for the working class should be and how much money should be expended. It was therefore an area of fundamental conflict. There were disputes over teachers' salaries, particularly at the annual review of salaries. There were disputes over deal desks, gas lighting, tarred playgrounds, central halls, cricket equipment, rocking horses, museum cupboards and pianos. The Progressives outvoted such opposition but at the price of much heated debate.

(1) General Sub-Committee Book, Enfield School Board.

(2) Minutes of the Enfield School Board, 6th June 1902.

The voluntary schools were financed by government grant, fees and subscriptions. As subscriptions fell, the schools fell into a precarious financial state. The Rev. Kempe noted a drop in subscriptions after the School Board was set up. (1) In the same year, the Rev. Davies wrote to the National Society. "The district of St.James', Enfield Highway, is a poor one, made up of very small shop-keepers, artisans, farm labourers, factory hands and publicans and contains but a few families....not more than five or six who are able to give substantial help." (2) Both of these clergymen were under pressure in running the National schools and both were members of the Enfield School Board.

By 1896 the Church schools in Enfield were £1,000 in debt. It took all the determination and work of Hodson to raise such funds. The problems, however, were to recur, for, by November 1900, Hodson, in his Annual Report of the Church Schools Management Committee reported a further debt of £1,000. (3)

It is interesting to note that the peak of Hodson's obstruction on the School Board came not as a result of the financial crisis of the voluntary schools but when the number of School Board places overtook the number of Church school places. It was a great strategic loss to Hodson, coming as it did in those uncertain months before the passing of Balfour's Education Act, December 1902. Until the opening of the new Chase Side Board school the voluntary schools had offered the majority of elementary school places. It was an achievement of some pride for the supporters of the voluntary schools. Once the numbers

(1) Jesus Church Parish Reports, 25th December 1894.

(2) N.S.R.O. Correspondence files. St.James' Schools.

(3) Meyers Observer, 9th November 1900.

were overtaken by Board School provision, the influence of the Church schools would appear to wane. By the end of the School Board era, there were a thousand more Board school places than the Church schools. The voluntary schools were not without friends. When the Unionists came to power in 1895, they pledged to help. The Education Act of 1896 had brought a further grant of 4 shillings a child to the voluntary schools and a limitation on the rating power of the School Board to 20 shillings a child. The following year, 1897, brought the Voluntary Schools Act which gave even more government aid to the Church schools.

So, on a national level, there was a concerted attempt to diminish the powers of the School Boards. The knowledge of such an attempt made the School Board supporters nervous in policy and action. (1) Relations between the Progressives and the Church Party on the Enfield School Board became tense and attitudes wary. The 1902 Education Act was the culmination of the Church's agitation for financial assistance; the Church schools became rate-aided and the School Boards were dissolved.

The Working Class as an aspect of conflict on the School Board.

The whole conflict over deficiency and economy was rooted in the issue of what type and standard of education should be suitable for working-class children. Whether the provision of building and education met the requirements of working-class parents is difficult to assess. While the positive achievements of the School Board must have placated much of the working-class discontent with the voluntary system, there were still a number of people who resisted the social control inherent in the elementary school system. (2)

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- (1) The existence of a School Board Association helped to spread apprehension at a national level.
 - (2) There was a strong working-class movement against vaccination. When the local doctor suggested that the Board schools should be Vaccination Centres, Matthews made an impassioned speech against such a step. The idea was dropped.

An examination of the benefits that Board schools brought to working people show that the setting up of a School Board developed both the educational and political potential of the working class. The most important facet of the School Board era was that working people could influence the elections by the use of the cumulative vote. Furthermore, when J.H. Matthews was elected, the working class had direct representation on this important body. The number of letters from working-class parents to the School Board indicate that they felt they had access to the Board over grievances.

Matthews was true to the working-class belief that the School Boards were popular democratic bodies and he often objected to part of the Board's committee work being carried out in camera, with the Press and Public forced to wait outside the room. When, after the Cockerton Judgement, the Board had to apply to the County Council to run the Continuation classes, Matthews was enraged. He felt power was being taken away from the democratically-elected Board.

The terms of the 1902 Education Act were interpreted by working-class activists as a bitter loss of real influence. Working people did not feel they would have the same means of expression, as they had when electing a School Board, when the new Education Committee of the E.U.D.C. was appointed.

The School Board had given working-class parents a choice of schools. As the figures showed, when each new Board school opened, parents exercised their powers of choice; some parents moved their children away from the Church schools. The sometimes sluggish supply of Board school accommodation meant that many parents who wished their children to receive a Board School education had to send their children to a

Church school. (1) It was this element of choice whether made by parent or child that had threatened the survival of the Church schools. (2)

The free education offered in the Board schools must have also enhanced the recruitment of pupils. The 1891 Education Act had hardly been exercised in Enfield prior to the calling of the School Board because Hodson depended so heavily on the income from fees. Not only were many working-class parents denied a neighbourhood school under the voluntary system, but they were denied a right to free places for their children.

There is considerable evidence of working-class hostility towards the voluntary system. As a spokesman, J.H. Matthews said he was against state assistance for the Church schools although "he didn't much care as to either Church or Chapel." (3) While Matthews had sometimes voted with Hodson and Kempe in defence of existing schools, he was bitterly opposed to the Vicar of Enfield obstructing the supply of necessary Board school accommodation. Matthew's concern was always to supply enough school places at an economical price.

Although many parents were apathetic, others wanted a high standard of education in the Board schools. W.S. Richards, Hon. Sec. of the Free and Popular Education League, was one of the first to defend the School Board against cries of extravagance. (4) In the same month, J.H. Matthews called a public meeting in Enfield Highway to support the building of

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- (1) Meyers Observer, 11th August 1899. W. McLintic wrote to the School Board. There were many other letters from parents.
- (2) An interview with Mrs. Theobald showed that many children moved schools on their own initiative rather than that of the parents. She, herself, moved from St. Michael's to Chase Side Board school on a whim.
- (3) Meyers Observer, 25th April 1902.
- (4) ibid., 15th November 1895.

school halls which was an issue of debate on the Board. A petition of support for the Progressive advocates of school halls was despatched.(1) When Matthews was elected to the Second School Board he continued to support the principle that the School Board should build fine buildings with fine equipment.

Obviously the burden of the Education Rate fell heavily on the working class. There were frequent public protests that landlords used the opportunity of an increase in the Education Rate to increase rents exorbitantly. J.H.Matthews felt strongly about economy for two reasons; he identified with the plight of working-class tenants and he himself, as the owner of ten houses, disliked heavy taxation. (2) On the School Board Matthews often voted with the Vicar on issues of economy. He considered the cost of the new Chase Side Board School too high and fought and lost the issue through the months of planning.

Working-class people certainly gained improved educational facilities in the period of the Enfield School Board. The number of public meetings organised against the 1902 Education Act indicated working-class appreciation of the work of the Board. Nevertheless in comparison with the achievements of the School Boards of the big cities little had been gained. There was no higher grade school in Enfield. There was no organised attempt to introduce science into the curriculum. There was no mention of the issues being discussed in socialist circles about the need for school dinners and school clinics. The Enfield School Board had fulfilled the requirements of the 1870 Education Act and had aspired to nothing more.

(1) Meyers Observer, 21st November 1895.

(2) Electoral Registers. Local History Section, London Borough of Enfield Libraries.

The main stream of socialist thought had moved on in the nineties while Liberal views on education had stultified after the 1891 Education Act. There was evidence of a growing split, at a national level, between the Progressives and the Labour Movement. The issue of free meals formed the break; the Progressives saw free meals as a charity and the Labour supporters as a necessity. The Progressives, however, had joined forces with socialists in adopting the Trade Union call for Trade Union rates for all workers on School Board contracts. It was a form of control over labour relations when the power of the Unions was questionable. (1)

The Trades Unions Movement had also developed new aims in education. The Trades Union Congress launched a campaign for the introduction of free dinners in elementary schools. The Unions had identified the relationship between under-nourishment, sickness and poor academic achievement. By 1897, the T.U.C. had accepted the principle of secondary education for all working-class children. There is no evidence in Enfield of the Trades Unions pushing for improved elementary education. There was no Trades Union call for a Higher Grade school.

The Labour Movement was slow to appreciate the growing strength of the Voluntary Movement in the late nineties. Francis Channing, M.P., saw the seriousness of the situation and campaigned to keep School Boards as part of the administration of elementary education. Over the issue of the Education Act of 1896, the Labour Movement was divided. It was only when the Higher Grade schools and evening classes came under threat that the Labour Movement took interest. The Movement was unified against the Cockerton Judgement of 1900 and the Education Act of 1902.(2)

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- (1) The Enfield Highway Cooperative Society exercised a similar power when it stopped trading with Wrights Mill, in Ponders End, because the firm paid workers less than Union rates.
 - (2) W.McCann, 'Trade Unionist, Co-operative and Socialist Organisations in relation to Popular Education' Ph.D., Manchester, 1960.

The Enfield School Board had been set up because the existing social and political structure was inadequate to cope with an urbanising society. Despite its flaws, the School Board was able to offer a certain standard of education, superior to the Church schools, which complied with the working-class aspirations for a better system of elementary education.

CONCLUSION.

In the period under review, Enfield was in the process of escalating urbanisation. Such growth put pressures on the existing power structure of the locality. However, the County Councils Act of 1888 and the Local Government Act of 1894 allowed for the adaption of local government to a changing environment. In elementary education there had been a genuine attempt by the Rev. Hodson and the Church Party to match school accommodation to the growing demands but the Voluntary System was an outmoded institution when the process of urbanisation demanded the rapid building of schools. The institution of a School Board offered a more efficient method of supplying a large number of school places.

This research into the religious and political conflicts of elementary education was begun with a simplistic view of those conflicts. A detailed study of the local community has led to an appreciation of the complexities of the issues. There are no heroes or villains of the piece but a host of men who held firm but conflicting views on elementary education, either at a personal or a group level. There were conflictual hierarchical levels too which took local conflicts into a larger dimension. There was conflict between the Enfield Board of Health and the legislation issued by central government on elementary education in the years 1870-94, there was conflict between the Enfield School Board and the Enfield Urban District Council over the making up of roads and the supply of water to the Board Schools and there was antagonism between the Enfield School Board and Middlesex County Council following the Cockerton Judgement. The national Parliamentary parties had a role to play at all these levels, perhaps producing, but certainly intensifying, the growing conflicts between

local and central government. The calling of a School Board in Enfield through the Liberal Party's political machinery rather than through local government was one such example.

The issue of deficiency of school accommodation is difficult to prove. Professor West has questioned the assumption that there were large deficiencies at the time of the 1870 Education Act. An examination of the available evidence in Enfield, nonetheless indicates that there was a deficiency which neither the voluntary schools nor the private schools could supply. The subsequent publication of the Enumerator Schedules of the 1881 and 1891 Census will offer more accurate figures on the number of children in Enfield and comparison with the number of school places available will therefore reveal the nature of deficiency. The Enfield School Board was not necessarily called because there was a gross deficiency but because a powerful Liberal pressure group presented that view to the Education Department. The key issue in Enfield in the years 1870-94 was the controversial delay of a School Board; an issue eventually resolved by a transfer from a local level of decision to a national level.

The first School Board Election revealed the full extent of local conflicts. It uncovered the intensity of bitterness and animosity between the Nonconformists and the Church Party. The Election further showed that the Rev. Hodson had been out-manoeuvred by forces in society which he himself had not identified. The Rev. Hodson had neither appreciated the class conflicts involved in the issue of elementary education nor the power of the working-class vote. The result of the School Board Election revealed a shift of power away from the village power structure towards a middle-class predominance. This shift was confirmed a few months later at the first election of the Enfield Urban District Council.

In this period the Nonconformists not only achieved their goal of a School Board but also formed a majority group upon it. Their desire for status in the community was also satisfied, with men like George Spicer earning local respect and affection. Furthermore, the Nonconformists had won the right to educate their children in the schools of their choice and to receive religious instruction of a non-denominational nature. During the era of the Enfield School Board, the Nonconformists were satisfied that elementary Board schools were financed by the Rates against which the Church schools with their inadequate financing were unable to compete on equal terms. The passing of the 1902 Education Act reversed the position of the two groups. The Church Party was then satisfied that the Church schools were financed by the Rates while many Nonconformists resisted the payment of that part of the Education Rate that financed the voluntary schools. (1) The Nonconformists were also dismayed at their loss of control over elementary education.

In the short term the Church Party felt the establishment of a School Board was a symbol of failure, for the principle of religious education could no longer be fully upheld in Enfield. The Rev. Hodson, with hindsight, had secured the voluntary system in Enfield; most of the Church schools have survived to the present day. Yet Hodson, Vicar of Enfield 1870-1904, lived to see his Church schools financed by the Rates. His long years of service were a key factor in the achievements of the Church Party.

The importance of the education system has made it a natural arena for conflict. The conflicts were political issues of social control as

(1) The Rev. Storer Toms and Vincent, the Headmaster at Chase Side Board School, were both vociferous "conscientious objectors."

well as conflictual religious issues. The 1880s and 90s saw, in Enfield, the middle class challenging the village feudal system and the subsequent emergence of a working-class movement seeking class representation. The heightening of such class antagonisms brought a new dimension of conflict in the last years of the Enfield School Board. As J.S.Hurt noted,

Essentially it was a conflict between protagonists of differing visions of society, for whoever controlled the schools could influence the education of the rising generations in a State that was moving slowly, albeit possibly unwittingly, towards parliamentary democracy.

(1)

(1) J.Hurt, Elementary Schooling and the Working Classes 1860-1918 (1979) p.76.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

MAP OF ENFIELD, 1851.

APPENDIX II.

MAP OF ENFIELD, 1897.

2ND EDITION, ORDNANCE SURVEY.

APPENDIX IIIPercentage of Ages of Persons Male and Female in Enfield 1871-1901.

	1871	1881	1891	1901
Under 5	14	14	14	12
5-10	13	13	13	12
10-15	11	11	11	11
15-20	9	8	9	9
20-25	8	8	8	17
25-30	7	7	8	8
30-35	6	6	7	7
35-40	6	5	6	6
40-45	5	5	5	5
45-50	4	4	4	4
50-55	3	3	3	3
55-60	2	3	2	2
60-65	2	2	2	2
65-70	1	1	1	1
70-75	1	1	1	1
TOTAL POPULATION	16,054	19,104	31,799	42,939

Figures taken from the Census Reports 1871-1901.

APPENDIX IV.

The Number of Children in both Voluntary Schools and Board Schools on the books and the rate of attendance.

Date	On Books		Average Att.		% Attend.		Total of Children	
	Board	Vol.	Board	Vol.	Board	Vol.		
May 1896	1327	5106	1133	4089	85.3	80	6433	
June 1896	1870	4834	1559	3858	83.3	79.8	6704	Bush Hill Park opened
Nov. 1896	2126	4759	1772	3631	83.3	76.3	6885	
Jan. 1897	2363	4665	2055	3472	84.6	73.7	7028	Chesterfield opened
May 1897	2612	4702	2271	3836	84.5	81.3	7314	
June 1897	2946	4583	2459	3444	80.8	74.6	7529	Alma Road opened
June 1898	3198	4638	2807	3737	85.9	79.8	7836	
June 1900	3885	4590	3386	3830	85.4	82.5	8475	
Feb. 1901	3814	4461	3195	3578	80.4	78.9	8275	
Apr. 1901	4078	4394	3606	3765	86.2	85.2	8472	Chase Side opened
May 1901	4443	4327	4056	3771	89	86	8770	
May 1902	4926	4349	4514	3814	90.6	86.6	9275	
March 1903	5135	4140	4545	3447	86.3	82.5	9275	

Figures taken from the monthly reports of the School Attendance Officer to the Enfield School Board.

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(Works of reference are not included):

- A. MANUSCRIPTS AND OTHER COLLECTIONS.
- B. PARLIAMENT.
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